00066562

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 06 February, 2016

SKETCHES

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE;

WITH

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

SPIRIT OF THE TIMES,

MEN, AND REVOLUTIONS.

BY

THE VISCOUNT DE CHATEAUBRIAND.

66562

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

I-d-11

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN,

13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1836.

820.9
Cha/Ske
.66562.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS,
WHITEFRIARS.

CONTENTS

OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

PART THE THIRD—(CONTINUED.)

LITERATURE UNDER THE FIRST TWO STUARTS AND DURING THE COMMONWEALTH.

	Page
MILTON—his Birth.—College	1
Milton at Home.—Works of his Youth	7
Milton in Italy	13
Milton's Return to England.—His Occupations and his first Controversial Works	16
Milton's Marriage	21
Milton's Treatise on Divorce	24
Speech on the Liberty of the Press	29
Death of Milton's Father.—Historical Events.—Treatise on the Tenure of Kings and Magistrates	32
Milton, Latin Secretary to the Council of State of the Commonwealth.—The "Eiconoclastes"	37
Defence of the English People against Salmasius	45

Page

Second Defence 51
Bradshaw 53
Fairfax 54
Cromwell 55
Liberation of Greece 58
Milton's Blindness.—His Despatches . . . 63
Richard Cromwell.—Milton's Opinions concerning the Commonwealth, Tithes, and Parliamentary Reform . 69
The Restoration.—Milton arrested, and set at liberty—The Poet's Fidelity to Cromwell 77
New Works of Milton.—His Latin Dictionary—His Muscovy.—His History of England . . . 81
The Poetical Works of Milton.—Plot of Paradise Lost . 90
Further Particulars concerning Milton . . . 96
The Publication of Paradise Lost . . . 100
Samson Agonistes.—Paradise Regained.—New Logic.—True Religion.—Death of Milton . . . 105
Of the Imperfections of Paradise Lost . . . 113
The Plan of Paradise Lost 119
Characters of the Persons in Paradise Lost . . . 126
The Father and the Son 134
Milton's Angels 139
Milton's Demons and Allegorical Personages . . 142
Milton in Paradise Lost 145

PART THE FOURTH.

LITERATURE UNDER THE LAST TWO STUARTS.

Comparison between the Men and Events of the English and of the French Revolutions . . . 157
Clubs 162

Page
Danton 168
The People of both Nations at the Revolutionary Epoch. —Royalist Peasantry of England 171
Portrait of a Vendean 179
Cromwell—Bonaparte 183
Lovelace.—My Detention at the Prefecture of the Police. —God Save the King. 187
Prose.—Tillotson—Temple—Burnet—Clarendon—Algernon Sidney 195
Poetry.—Dryden—Prior—Waller—Buckingham—Roscommon—Rochester—Shaftesbury, &c. . . . 199
Butler.—Neglected Writers 204
End of the Stuarts 210

PART THE FIFTH.

LITERATURE UNDER THE HOUSE OF HANOVER.

Completion and Perfection of the English Language — Death of Languages 217
Effect of Criticism on Languages.—Criticism in France. —Our Vanities.—Death of Languages . . . 225
There will be no more Universal Literary Reputations. —And for what reason 231
Other Causes which tend to destroy Universal Reputation 236
William and Mary.—Queen Anne.—Classic School . 242
Periodical Literature.—Addison—Pope—Swift—Steele 245
Transition from Classic Literature to Didactic, Descriptive, and Sentimental Literature.—Poems of different writers 248
Young 251
Gray.—Thomson.—Delille.—Fontanes . . . 257
Re-action.—Literary Transformation.—Historians . 265

Page

Literary Transformation (continued).— Philosophers—Poets—Political Economists 268
The Stage.—Mrs. Siddons.—The Pit.—Invasion of German literature 270
Literary Transformation (continued). — Political Eloquence—Fox—Burke—Pitt 274
Change in English Manners.— Gentlemen Farmers.—Clergy—Fashionable World—George III. . . . 279
Travels.—Captain Ross—Jacquemont—Lamartine . 282
Novels.—Sad Truths arising from long Correspondences. Epistolary Style 296
Modern Novels 302
Walter Scott.—The Jewess 306
The Lake School.—Poets among the Working Classes . 311
The Princess Charlotte.—Knox 315
Songs.—Lord Dorset—Beranger 317
Beattie 324
Lord Byron.—The Elm of Harrow 330
The two new Literary Schools.—Some Resemblances of Destiny 334
School of Lord Byron 341
Lord Byron at the Lido 346
Conclusion 351
Milton 360

AN

HISTORICAL VIEW

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

MILTON.

HIS BIRTH. COLLEGE.

ABOVE a multitude of prose writers and poets during the stormy times of Charles I. and the Protector, towers the majestic form of Milton. Where are the contemporaries of that genius, the Cowleys, the Wallers, the Denhams, the Sucklings, the Marvels, the Crashaws, the Lovelaces, the Davenants, the Withers, the Habingtons, the Herberts, the Carews, the Stanleys? What French reader ever heard of any of these names, excepting two or three! The "Spirit of Christianity" has done justice to the "Paradise Lost." I had to retract some of my opinions respecting Shakspeare and Dante; but I have no reparation to make to him whose poem was the occasion of this work on English literature; I have therefore merely to

explain the motives of an admiration, which a closer examination of his master-piece served only to heighten. Being obliged to pause at beauties which I was striving to transfuse into our language, I learned to appreciate them better, at the same time that I despaired of rendering them with all the force with which I felt them.

Milton was no more; he was unknown; his genius, rising like a spirit from the tomb, came to inquire the cause of this ignorance. People gazed upon it in astonishment; they asked if the author of twelve thousand forgotten verses was really immortal. The majestic and dazzling vision first made them cast down their eyes; presently, they fell prostrate and adored it They then set about inquiring who this secretary of Cromwell's, this pamphleteer champion of regicide, detested by some, despised by others, really was. Bayle commenced by searching after facts touching the person and look of Milton; that look was bold, and not inferior in majesty to the look of a king.

A malediction rested on the respectable family of Milton, which had been stripped of its property during the civil wars of the Red and White Roses. Milton's father was a Protestant, his grandfather a Catholic: the latter disinherited his son. The curse of the grandfather, overleaping one generation, alighted on the head of the grandson.

Milton's father settled in London, where he

became a scrivener or attorney, and married Sarah Caston, whose family was related to the Bradshaws and the Haughtons. By her he had a daughter, Anne, and two sons, John and Christopher. Christopher, the younger, was a royalist; became one of the barons of the Exchequer, and a judge of the Common Pleas under James II.; and died in obscurity, having been dismissed from his office shortly after or before the revolution of 1688. John, the elder, was a republican, and died unnoticed, like his brother; but a very different cause removed him from the public gaze. To him may be applied what he says of the holy hill in heaven, that it was not seen because it was obscured by excess of light.

Milton's father was fond of the arts. He composed an *In nomine* for forty parts, and some old airs by him are preserved in Wilby's collection. Apollo, dividing his gifts between the father and the son, had bestowed music on the one and poesy on the other.

> Dividuumque deum genitorque puerque tenemus.
> *Milto ad Patrem.*
>
> Between us we receive,
> Father and son, the whole inspiring god*.

* This and the following poetical quotations from Milton's Latin and Italian poems, are borrowed from the version of Cowper.—*Translator.*

The father was probably born in France. His immortal son came into the world on the 9th of December, 1608, in Bread-street, in the city of London, at the sign of the Spread Eagle, an omen and an emblem. Shakspeare was still living. Milton received his first instruction at home, in the shade of the tomb of that great uncultivated genius. His domestic tutor was Thomas Young, who was compelled to quit his country on account of religious opinions; when his pupil was placed at St. Paul's school, under the care of Alexander Gill. His intense application to study brought on him at an early age, violent pains in the head, and great weakness of sight—constitutional ailments, the germ of which he had received from his mother. At seventeen he was removed to Christ College, Cambridge, and placed under the care of the learned William Chapel, afterwards bishop of Cork and Ross, in Ireland. His handsome person gained him the appellation of "the Lady of Christ's College"—an appellation which he complacently calls to mind in one of his addresses to the University. He furnished evidence of his poetic talents in several Latin compositions and paraphrases of the Psalms in English. The hymn on the Nativity, in particular, is admirable for its rhythm and its unexpected effect.

"It was the winter wild,
While the heav'n-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature, in awe to him,
Had dofft her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathise:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air,
To hide her guilty front with innocent show;
And, on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw.
* * * *

No war or battle's sound
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood
Unstained with hostile blood,
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng,
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sov'reign Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whisp'ring new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fixed in stedfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;

And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer, that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake and bid them go."

Having taken his degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1628, and Master in 1632, Milton left Cambridge, and refused, from a feeling of independence, to enter into the church, as he went to the University with the intention of doing. "Whoso taketh orders," said he, "must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which, unless he take with a conscience that can retch, he must straight perjure himself."

Some passages in his first Latin elegy, in which he appears to prefer the pleasures of London to the discomforts of Cambridge, furnished occasion for calumnies which were afterwards circulated concerning him; he was charged with having been *vomited* forth by the University after an inordinate and riotous youth: and it is asserted in pamphlets that he was obliged to go abroad and hide himself in Italy. Johnson is of opinion that Milton was "the last student in either University that suffered the public indignity of corporal punishment." In all this there is no truth whatever; nay, it is at variance with the dates of a life not less correct than religious.

MILTON AT HOME.—WORKS OF HIS YOUTH.

MILTON's father, having amassed a small fortune, had retired into the country, to Horton, near Colebrooke, in Buckinghamshire. Milton returned to him there, and spent five years absorbed in the study of the Greek and Latin authors. From time to time he made excursions to London, to purchase books, and to take lessons in mathematics, fencing, and music.

To a friend who reproached him for secluding himself from the world, he thus wrote:—

"Yet if you thinke that too much love of learning is in fault, and that I have given myselfe to dreame away my years in the arms of a studious retirement, like Endymion with the moon on Latmus hill; yet, consider that, if it were no more but this to overcome this, there is on the other side both ill more bewitchful to entice away, and natural years more swaying, and good more available to withdraw to that you wish me: as

first, all the fond hopes which forward youth and vanitie are fledge with; none of which can sort with this Pluto's helmet, as Homer calls it, of obscurity, and would soon cause me to throw it off, if there were nothing else in't but an affected and fruitlesse curiosity of knowing. The love of learning, as it is the pursuit of something good, it would sooner follow the more excellent and supream good known and præsented, and soe be quickly diverted from the emptie and fantastic chase of shadows and notions to the solid good, flowing from due and tymely obedience to that command in the gospell, set out by the terrible seasing of him that hid the talent. ....Yet, that you may see that I am something suspicious of myselfe, and doe take notice of a certain belatednesse in me, I am the bolder to send you some of my nightward thoughts, some while since, because they come in not altogether unfitly, made up in a Petrarchian stanza, which I told you of:—

> "How soon hath time, the subtle thief of youth,
> Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!
> My hasting days fly on with full career,
> But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th."

Between 1624 and 1638, he produced the "Arcades;" "Comus, or the Masque;" "Lycidas," in which he seems to prophesy the tragic end of

Archbishop Laud; "L'Allegro;" and "Il Penseroso," Latin "Elegies," and "Sylvæ."

Of "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," Johnson gives this lively analysis:—

"The *cheerful* man hears the lark in the morning; the *pensive* man hears the nightingale in the evening. The *cheerful* man sees the cock strut, and hears the horn and hounds echo in the wood; then walks, *not unseen*, to observe the glory of the rising sun, or listen to the singing milkmaid, and view the labours of the ploughman and the mower; then casts his eyes about him, over scenes of smiling plenty, and looks up to the distant tower, the residence of some fair inhabitant; thus he pursues rural gaiety through a day of labour or of play, and delights himself at night with the fanciful narratives of superstitious ignorance.

"The pensive man, at one time, walks *unseen* to muse at midnight; and at another hears the sullen curfew. If the weather drives him home, he sits in a room lighted only by *glowing embers;* or by a lonely lamp outwatches the north star, to discover the habitation of separate souls, and varies the shades of meditation by contemplating the magnificent or pathetic scenes of tragic and epic poetry. When the morning comes, a morning gloomy with rain and wind, he walks into the dark trackless woods, falls asleep by some murmuring

water, and with melancholy enthusiasm expects some dream of prognostication, or some music played by aërial performers.

"Both Mirth and Melancholy are solitary, silent inhabitants of the breast, that neither receive nor transmit communication; no mention is therefore made of a philosophical friend or a pleasant companion. Seriousness does not arise from any participation of calamity, nor gaiety from the pleasures of the bottle.

"The man of *cheerfulness*, having exhausted the country, tries what towered cities will afford, and mingles with scenes of splendour, gay assemblies, and nuptial festivities; but he mingles a mere spectator, as, when the learned comedies of Jonson or the wild dramas of Shakspeare are exhibited, he attends the theatre.

"The *pensive* man never loses himself in crowds, but walks the cloister, or frequents the cathedral.

"For the old age of Cheerfulness, Milton makes no provision; but Melancholy he conducts with great dignity to the close of life.

"Through these two poems the images are properly selected and nicely distinguished, but the colours of the diction seem not sufficiently discriminated. His Cheerfulness is without levity, and his Pensiveness without asperity. I know not whether

the characters are kept sufficiently apart. No mirth can, indeed, be found in his melancholy; but I am afraid that I always meet with some melancholy in his mirth. They are two noble efforts of imagination."

Milton borrowed several images in his beautiful poems from Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," printed in 1624.

MILTON IN ITALY.

In 1638 Milton obtained permission from his father to travel. Viscount Scudamore, ambassador of Charles I., received at Paris the future apologist of the murder of that King, and introduced him to Grotius. At Florence, Milton visited Galileo, then nearly blind, and half a prisoner of the Inquisition. In the "Paradise Lost" he makes frequent mention of the celestial messenger, *nuncius sidereus*, thus rendering to him the hospitality of great men. At Rome, he made acquaintance with Holstein, the librarian of the Vatican. At Cardinal Barberini's he was struck by the singing of Leonora Baroni, and addressed to her a poem, inspired by the spot where the voice of Horace had of old been heard.

Altera Torquatum cepit Leonora poetam,
Cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.
Ah! miser ille tuo quantò felicius ævo
Perditus, et propter te, Leonora, foret!

Another Leonora once inspired
Tasso with fatal love to frenzy fired;
But how much happier, lived he now, were he
Pierced with whatever pangs for love of thee!

Milton condescended to curb his genius in some Italian sonnets. It is amusing to see the magnificent bard of Satan disporting among the sweet numbers of Petrarch.

Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso;
E'l bel Tamigi cangio con bel Arno.
Amor lo volse . . . . . .
Seppi ch' amor cosa mai volse indarno.

While thus . . . I essay
Thy praise in verse to British ears unknown,
And Thames exchange for Arno's fair domain;
So Love has will'd . . . . . .
And what he wills, he never wills in vain.

Milton became acquainted at Naples with Manso, Marquis of Villa, a veteran who enjoyed the double honour of being the friend of Tasso and the host of Milton, to whom he addressed á parody on Pope Gregory's distich:

Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verùm herclè, angelus ipse fores.

"If thy piety were equal to thy understanding, figure, eloquence, beauty, and manners—verily

thou wouldst not be an Englishman, but an angel!"

Milton paid his debt of gratitude in a Latin poem full of energy and tenderness.

> Well may we think, O dear to all above,
> Thy birth distinguish'd by the smile of Jove,
> And that Apollo shed his kindliest pow'r,
> And Maia's son, in that propitious hour;
> Since only minds so born can comprehend
> A poet's worth, and yield that worth a friend.
> . . . . . .
> O might so true a friend to me belong,
> So skill'd to grace the votaries of song,
> Should I recall hereafter into rhyme
> The kings and heroes of my native clime,
> Arthur the chief, who even now prepares
> In subterraneous being future wars,
> With all his martial knights to be restored
> Each to his seat around the fed'ral board;
> And O! if spirit fail me not, disperse
> Our Saxon plunderers in triumphant verse.

The future bard of the innocent joys of Eden did not obtain the favour which he here implored. He had no friend, no defender of his fame, but posterity. The poet entreats Manso not to disdain an hyperborean Muse, gracefully adding,

> Nos etiam nostro modulantes flumine cycnos
> Credimus obscuras noctis sensisse umbras.

> We too, where Thames, with its unsullied waves,
> The tresses of the blue-haired ocean laves,
> Hear oft by night, or slumbering seem to hear,
> O'er his wide stream the swan's voice warbling clear.

Milton had formed the design of visiting Sicily and Greece. What a precursor of Byron! The troubles in his native country recalled him; but he did not return to England till he had seen Venice, that beauty of Italy, who still retains so many charms, though expiring on the margin of the waves.

MILTON'S RETURN TO ENGLAND.

HIS OCCUPATIONS AND HIS FIRST CONTROVERSIAL WORKS.

THE traveller, having returned to London, did not take an active part in the first movements of the revolution. On this subject Johnson says, "Let not our veneration for Milton forbid us to look with some degree of merriment on great promises and small performances, on the man who hastens home, because his countrymen are contending for their liberty, and, when he reaches the scene of action, vapours away his patriotism in a private boarding-school. This is the period of his life from which all his biographers seem inclined to shrink. They are unwilling that Milton should be degraded to a schoolmaster; but, since it cannot be denied that he taught boys, one finds out that he taught for nothing, and another, that his motive was only zeal for the propagation of learning and virtue: and all tell what they do not

know to be true, only to excuse an act which no wise man will consider as in itself disgraceful."

The satirical and prejudiced spirit of Johnson displays itself in this passage. The Doctor, who had never seen a revolution, was ignorant that in these great convulsions there are fields of battle everywhere, and that each man chooses that to which he is called by his inclination or his genius: Milton's sword would not have done for liberty what he effected with his pen. The Doctor, a stanch royalist, forgets also that all the royalists did not take up arms or ascend the scaffold like the Duke of Hamilton, Lord Holland, and Lord Capel; that Lord Arundel, for example, a friend of the muses, like Milton, and to whom science is indebted for the Arundelian marbles at Oxford, left London at the commencement of the civil war, though at the time earl-marshal of England, and died peaceably at Padua. It is true, that his unfortunate nephew, William Howard, Lord Strafford, paid a tribute for him to misfortune, and it is but too well known by whom his blood was spilled.

For three years Milton attended to the education of his sister's two sons and some other boys of their age. He lived at first in St. Bride's churchyard, Fleet-street, and afterwards in a large house, with a garden, in Aldersgate-street. While

teaching the ancient languages, he improved himself in them; and he learned Hebrew, Chaldæan, and Syriac. In 1640, at the meeting of the Long Parliament, he made his debut as a polemical writer, and pleaded the cause of religious liberty against the Established Church. His work, addressed to a friend, was divided into two books, and entitled, "Of Reformation touching Church Discipline, and the Causes which have hitherto prevented it." He afterwards published three treatises, "Of Prelatical Episcopacy," "The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy," and "Apology for Smectymnuus." This name is composed of the initials of the five ministers who adopted it in their reply to Bishop Hall's "Humble Remonstrance," in defence of episcopacy. For readers of the present day, there is nothing of interest in these works, unless it be what Milton says in the "Reason of Church Government" concerning his intention of writing a poem in English.

"The thing which I had to say, and those intentions which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself any thing worth to my country, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath pluckt from me by an abortive and fore-dated discovery; and the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man's to pro-

mise. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine; nor to be obtained by the invocations of Dame Memory and her seven daughters; but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." In another place, speaking of his travels in Italy, and the encomiums with which his writings were received there, he says, "I began to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not less to an inward prompting, which now grew daily upon me, that, by labour and intent study (which I take to be my portion in this life), joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die. These thoughts at once possessed me, and these other ..... to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue; ..... that, what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old, did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above of being a

Christian, might do for mine; not caring to be once named abroad, though perhaps I could attain to that, but content with these British islands as my world."

Milton did not make so good a market of his renown as Shakspeare, The latter delights us by the carelessness of his life: on the other hand, we love to see a genius yet unknown, foretelling his own fame, when after-times, confirming the prediction, reply,—"No! we have not let die that *something* which thou hast written."

Unfortunately, Milton, carried away by the impetuosity of his temper in this religious dispute, treats with disdain the learned and venerable Archbishop Usher, to whom science is indebted for an admirable work on the History of Chronology.

MILTON'S MARRIAGE.

At the age of nineteen, Milton wrote his seventh Latin elegy, in which he says :—

It was the spring, and newly-risen day
Peep'd o'er the hamlets on the first of May;
I * * * stray'd,
Careless, in city and suburban shade;
And passing and re-passing, nymphs, that moved
With grace divine, beheld where'er I roved.
* * * *
But one I mark'd,—then peace forsook my breast—
One—O how far superior to the rest!
* * * *
A fever new to me of fierce desire
Now seized my soul, and I was all on fire;
But she, the while, whom only I adore,
Was gone and vanished to appear no more.
In silent sadness I pursue my way;
* * * *
Till Learning taught me in his shady bower
To quit Love's servile yoke and spurn his power.
Then, on a sudden, the fierce flame supprest,
A frost continual settled on my breast.

This frost, however, was not continual, or we should be obliged to suppose that he loved none of his three wives; for he was thrice married. But who was the maiden who had so suddenly vanished? Perhaps that celestial companion, who visited the British Homer at night, and dictated his tenderest verses. In an excellent portraiture of Milton, M. Pichot relates that this mysterious sylph was Leonora, the Italian. The author of the "Pilgrimage to Cambridge" has founded a pathetic historical tale on this idea. The Rev. Mr. Bowles and Bulwer have worked up the same fiction.

The Earl of Essex having taken Reading in 1643, Milton's father and mother, who had retired to that town, returned to London and took up their residence with the poet. Milton was then thirty-five years old. One day, he stole away from home wholly unattended. His absence lasted a month, at the expiration of which he returned a married man to that abode which he quitted a bachelor. He had married the eldest daughter of Richard Powell, a justice of the peace, of Forest Hill, near Shotover, in Oxfordshire. Powell had borrowed of Milton's father five hundred pounds, which he never repaid; but he considered that he should settle the account by giving his daughter to the son of his creditor. This match, contracted

as clandestinely as an illicit amour, was not less inconstant. Milton did not forsake his wife, like Shakspeare; it was his wife who forsook him. The family of Mary Powell were royalists; whether it was because Mary would not live with a republican, or for some other reason, she returned to her parents. She promised to come back at Michaelmas, but she did not keep her word. Milton wrote letter after letter, but received no reply; at length he despatched a messenger, who threw away his eloquence and his time. The deserted husband then resolved to repudiate his runaway spouse. In order to extend to other husbands that independence which he asserted for himself, his genius suggested to him to convert a question of personal susceptibility into a question of liberty, and he published his treatise on "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce."

MILTON'S TREATISE ON DIVORCE.

THIS treatise, "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce restored, to the good of both sexes," is divided into two books. It opens with an address to the Long Parliament.

"If it were seriously asked, (and it would be no untimely question), renowned parliament, select assembly, who, of all teachers and masters that have ever taught, hath drawn the most disciples after him both in religion and in manners? it might be not untruly answered, Custom. Though virtue be commended for the most perswasive in her theory, and conscience, in the plain demonstration of the spirit, finds most evincing; yet, whether it be the secret of divine will, or the original blindness we are born in, so it happens for the most part, that custom still is silently received for the best instructor."

The writer then lays down several principles, which he does not prove as completely.

"Man is the occasion of his own miseries in most of those evils which he imputes to God's inflicting. It is not God who forbade divorce, but the priest. The canon law is ignorant and unjust in providing for the right of the body in marriage, but nothing for the wrongs and grievances of the mind. Marriage is not a remedy of lust, but the fulfilling of conjugal love and helpfulness. God regards love and peace in the family, more than a compulsive performance of marriage, which is more broke by a grievous continence than by a needful divorce. Nothing more hinders and disturbs the whole life of a Christian, than a matrimony found to be incurably unfit. Adultery is not the greatest breach of matrimony; there may be other violations as great. To prohibit divorce sought for natural causes is against nature. Of marriage God is the author and the witness; yet hence will not follow any divine astriction, more than what is subordinate to the glory of God, and the main good of either party; for as the glory of God, and their esteemed fitness one for the other, was the motive which led them both at first to think without other revelation that God had joined them together; so, when it shall be found by their apparent unfitness, that their continuing to be man and wife is against the glory of God and their mutual happiness, it may

assure them that God never joined them, who hath revealed his gracious will not to set the ordinance above the man for whom it was ordained; not to canonize marriage either as a tyranness or a goddess over the enfranchised life and soul of man. For wherein can God delight, wherein be worshipped, wherein be glorified, by the forcible continuing of an improper and ill-yoking couple? . . . . . Where can be the peace and love which must invite God to such a house? May it not be feared that the not divorcing of such a helpless disagreement will be the divorcing of God finally from such a place? . . . . . Who shall answer for the perishing of all those souls, perishing by stubborn expositions of particular and inferior precepts against the general and supreme rule of charity?

"Moses permitted divorce for hardness of heart. Christ neither did or could abrogate the law of divorce, but only reprieve the abuse thereof. St. Paul has commented on the words of Christ.— . . Christ gives no full comments or continued discourses, but speaks often monosyllables, like a master scattering the heavenly grain of his doctrine like pearls here and there, which requires a skilful and laborious gatherer. God the Son hath put all things under his own feet, but his commandments he hath left all under the feet of Charity."

Milton does not here resolve any particular question. He enters not into the difficulties touching children and the division of property. His enlarged mind was adverse to the English spirit, which confines itself to the circle of practical society. Milton generalises ideas, applies them to society in its totality, to entire human nature: he preaches up the independence of the man under every circumstance whatever. And yet this zealous champion of divorce has divinely sung the sacredness and the delights of conjugal love:—

> Hail wedded love, mysterious law, true source
> Of human offspring!
>
> Paradise Lost, Book IV.

In accordance with his principles respecting divorce, Milton solicited the hand of the young and accomplished daughter of a Dr. Davies, but she felt no partiality for the great genius who paid his addresses to her. The poet's wife now bethought herself of him: the Powell family, whose loyalty had cooled in proportion as the royal cause became less prosperous, wished for an accommodation. Milton having called upon a relative named Blackborough, the door of the room suddenly flew open; Mary threw herself in tears at the feet of her husband, and confessed her fault. Milton pardoned the offender. Posterity has pro-

fited by a connubial quarrel, for to this adventure we are indebted for that admirable scene between Adam and Eve in the 10th book of Paradise Lost:—

> Soon his heart relented
> Tow'rd her, his life so late and sole delight,
> Now at his feet submissive in distress!

The issue of a romantic marriage, begun in mystery, renewed in tears, was three daughters, and two of these Antigones re-opened the pages of antiquity to their blind father.

After the triumph of the Parliament, Milton offered an asylum to his wife's family. Todd has discovered among the public records, papers which shew that Milton took possession of the remnant of his father-in-law's property at his death—property which became his by mortgage for money lent by the poet's father. Powell's widow might have claimed her dowry, but she durst not; "for," said she, "Mr. Milton is a harsh and choleric man, and my daughter, whom he has married, would be undone if I were to prosecute my claim."

The Presbyterians having attacked the work on Divorce, the irascible author separated himself from their sect and became their enemy.

SPEECH ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

MILTON soon produced his "Areopagitica," the best English prose-work that he ever wrote. This term for the liberty of the press not being generally understood, he entitled his work "A Speech for the Liberty of unlicensed Printing," addressed to the Parliament of England.

After remarking that a censorship is useless against bad books, since it does not prevent their circulation, the author proceeds:—

"As good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself . . . . . A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life . . . . . Revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse.

"Lords and Commons of England! consider

what nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors . . . . . Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means.

"What should ye do then? should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up, and yet springing daily in this city? should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers over it to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? . . . . . I could recount what I have seen and heard in other countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannizes: where I have sat among their learned men (for that honour I had) and been counted happy to be born in such a place of philosophic freedom as they supposed England was; while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought. There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition, for thinking in

astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican inquisitors thought . . . . . Liberty is the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath rarefied and enlightened our spirits like the influence of heaven."

In this energetic language we recognise the author of "Paradise Lost." Milton is as great a writer in prose as in verse: revolutions have approximated him to us; his political ideas make him a man of our own epoch. He complains in his verses that he came a century too late; he might have complained in his prose that he had come a century too early. The hour of his resurrection is now arrived. I shall be proud to have lent a hand to draw Milton from his grave as a prose-writer; Glory long since said to him as a poet, "Arise!" and he did arise, and never will he lie down again.

The liberty of the press ought to deem it a high honour to have for its patron the author of "Paradise Lost:" he was the first by whom it was fairly and formally claimed. With what pathetic art the poet calls to mind that he had beheld Galileo, bent with age and infirmities, ready to expire in the fetters of the censorship, for having dared to assert the motion of the earth! This was an example congenial with the greatness of Milton. What would become of us now-a-days, if we were to hold such language!

DEATH OF MILTON'S FATHER.

HISTORICAL EVENTS—TREATISE ON THE TENURE OF KINGS AND MAGISTRATES.

In 1645 Milton published a collection of the English and Latin poems of his youth. The songs were set to music by Henry Laws, who belonged to the chapel of Charles I.: the voice of the apologist was soon to penetrate to the coffin of the sovereign in the chapel of Windsor.

Milton's father died; the parents of the poet's wife returned to their own home, and his house, says Philips, once more became the temple of the muses. At this time Milton was on the point of being employed as adjutant-general of the troops under Sir William Waller, a general of the Presbyterian party, who has left us his memoirs.

When, in the month of April, 1647, Fairfax and Cromwell had made themselves masters of London, Milton, in order to pursue his studies

more quietly, gave up his large establishment in Barbican, and retired to a small house in High Holborn, near which I long resided. It may not be amiss here to repeat an observation which I made at the beginning of this work:—"A view of literature," I said, "apart from the history of nations, would produce a prodigious fallacy: to hear the successive poets calmly singing their loves and their sheep, you would figure to yourself the uninterrupted existence of the golden age on the earth..... In every nation, even at the moment of the direst catastrophes and of the greatest events, there will always be a priest who prays, a poet who sings," &c.

We see Milton marry, engage in the study of languages, instruct boys, publish compositions in prose and verse, as if England were enjoying the most profound peace; and yet civil war was kindled, a thousand parties were tearing one another in pieces, and people walked amidst blood and ruins.

In 1644 the battles of Marstonmoor and Newbury were fought; and the head of the aged Archbishop Laud fell beneath the axe of the executioner. The years 1645 and 1646 beheld the battle of Naseby, the taking of Bristol, the defeat of Montrose, and the retreat of Charles I. to the Scotch army, who delivered up their sove-

reign to the English for the sum of four hundred thousand pounds

The years 1647, 1648, and 1649, were still more tragic. They comprise within their fatal period the rising of the army, the seizure of the King by Joyce, the oppression of the Parliament by the soldiery, the second civil war, the escape of the King, his second apprehension, the violent sifting of the Parliament, the trial and death of Charles I.

Let the reader refer to these dates, and place under them successively the works of Milton which I am about to treat of. Milton was probably present as a spectator at the decapitation of his sovereign; he returned home perhaps to write some verses, or to arrange for boys a paragraph of his Latin grammar; "Genders are three; masculine, feminine, and neuter." The fate of empires and of men is of no more account than this in the movement by which societies are carried along.

In France, too, there were, in 1793, poets who sang of Thyrsis, one of the characters of the Masque, and who were no Miltons; people went to plays, the dramatis personæ of which were honest country folk; shepherds trod the stage, while tragedy ran about the streets. We know that the Terrorists were remarkably mild in their manners: these gentle swains were particularly

fond of little children. Fouquier Tinville and his man Sampson, who smelt of blood, amused themselves at night in the theatre, and wept at the delineation of innocent country life.

No sooner was Charles I. executed, than the Presbyterians raised the outcry of murder, and of the inviolability of the royal person; though these Girondins of England had powerfully contributed to the catastrophe, they did not at least vote, like the French Girondins, for the death of the prince whose fate they deplored. To answer their clamour, Milton wrote his "Tenure of Kings and Magistrates." He had no difficulty to demonstrate that those who were loudest in their lamentations for the fate of Charles were the very people who had brought him to the scaffold. It is the case in all revolutions, that the different parties try to stop at certain limits at which they have fixed *right* and *justice;* but those who follow push them down and pass those marks, as, in a charge of cavalry, the last squadron tramples down the first, if it happens to stop.

Milton strives to prove that, in all ages and under all forms of government, it was legal to try a bad king, and to depose him or sentence him to death. "What can be more just and legal, if a subject, for certain crimes, be to forfeit by law from himself and posterity all his inheritance to

the king, than that a king, for crimes proportional, should forfeit all his title and inheritance to the people? unless the people must be thought created all for him, he not for them, and they all in one body inferior to him single; which were a kind of treason against the dignity of mankind to affirm.

"To say that kings are accountable to none but God is the overturning of all law and government. For, if they may refuse to give account, then all covenants made with them at coronation, all oaths are in vain and mere mockeries; all laws which they swear to keep made to no purpose."

In these doctrines Milton went no further than Mariana, and he supported them by texts of Scripture: the English revolution, in this point the very reverse of ours, was essentially religious.

MILTON, LATIN SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL OF STATE OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

THE "EICONOCLASTES."

THE political writings of Milton at length recommended him to the notice of the heads of the government; he was called to office, and appointed Latin secretary to the council of state of the Commonwealth: when the latter was transformed into a Protectorate, Milton naturally became secretary for the same language to the Protector. No sooner had he entered upon his new functions, than he was ordered to answer the "Eikon Basilike," published in London after Charles's death, as the will of Louis XVI. was circulated in Paris after the death of the martyr king. A French translation of the "Eikon" appeared with this title: *Pourtraict de sa sacrée Majesté durant sa Solitude et ses Souffrances.*

Milton wittily entitled his answer to this *Pourtraict*, "Eiconoclastes," the Image-breaker. Whilst

sacrificing the monarch afresh, he declared that he "did not insult over fallen majesty," but the fact was that circumstances forced him to speak out, and he "preferred Queen Truth to King Charles."

The work is written with method and perspicuity; and the author seems not to have given the rein so freely to his imagination as in his other political treatises.

"To descant on the misfortunes of a person fallen from so high a dignity, who hath also paid his final debt both to nature and his faults, is neither of itself a thing commendable, nor the intention of this discourse. Neither was it fond ambition, nor the vanity to get a name, present or with posterity, by writing against a king. . . . . Kings, most commonly, though strong in legions, are but weak at arguments; as they who ever have accustomed from their cradle to use their will only as their right hand, their reason always as their left. . . . . Nevertheless, for their sakes who, through custom, simplicity, or want of better teaching, have not more seriously considered kings than in the gaudy name of majesty, and admire them and their doings as if they breathed not the same breath with other mortal men, I shall make no scruple to take up (for it seems to be the challenge both of him and all his party) to

take up this gauntlet, though the king's, in the behalf of liberty and the Commonweath."

Milton, the more cruel to Charles I. in the "Eiconoclastes" for being the more cool, opposes to the "Eikon" this argument on the subject of Strafford's death.

The King, he says, "repents here of giving his consent, though most unwillingly, to the most seasonable and solemn piece of justice that had been done of many years in the land; but his sole conscience thought the contrary. . . . . The King was not satisfied in conscience to condemn him (Strafford) of high treason, and declared to both houses, 'that no fears or respects whatsoever should make him alter that resolution founded upon his conscience.' Either then his reolution was indeed not founded upon his conscience, or his conscience received better information, or else both his conscience and this his strong resolution struck sail, notwithstanding these glorious words, to his stronger fear; for, within a few days after, when the judges at a privy council, and four of his elected bishops, had picked the thorn out of his conscience, he was at length persuaded to sign the bill for Strafford's execution."

Milton calls the "Eikon" a "penitential book." "The simile," he says, "wherewith he begins, [the chapter upon his Retirement from Westmin-

ster.] I was about to have found fault with, as in a garb somewhat more poetical than for a statist; but meeting with many strains of like dress in other of his essays, and hearing him reported a more diligent reader of poets than of politicians, I began to think that the whole book might perhaps be intended a piece of poetry. The words are good; the fiction smooth and cleanly; there wanted only rhyme. . . . . He ascribes 'rudeness and barbarity, worse than the Indian,' to the English parliament; and 'all virtue' to his wife in strains that come almost to sonnetting."

Milton is satirical upon the reflections of the King at Holmby, and his testamentary letter to the Prince of Wales. On this subject he refers to the condemnation of several crowned heads, and pitilessly comes down to the execution of Mary Stuart, Charles's grandmother—a sneer without courage, for Charles slept at Windsor, and heard not what his enemy said to him.

"'He had rather wear a crown of thorns with our Saviour.' They who govern ill . . . . thorns they may find enow of their own gathering and their own twisting . . . . but to wear them as our Saviour wore them is not given to them that suffer by their own demerits."

In spite of his republican intrepidity, the Image-breaker appears embarrassed when he arrives at

the last chapter of the "Eikon." This last chapter is entitled "Meditations on Death." What does Milton? He runs away from these meditations. "All other human things," says he, "are disputed, and will be variously thought of to the world's end; but this business of death is a plain case, and admits no controversy; in that centre all opinions meet."

Thus it is that Milton takes part in the glory of the regicide; the executioner made the blood of Charles I. spirt over him, as the officiating priest in the ancient sacrifices sprinkled the spectators with the blood of the victim.

Milton suspected that the "Eikon" was not by the King, and this conjecture was afterwards verified; the work is Dr. Gauden's. The "Eikon" contains a prayer copied *verbatim* from that of Pamela, in Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia." It was a fine subject of mockery for the republicans, and of confusion for the royalists, who had believed in the authenticity of the portraiture of their master. Subsequently, Henry Hills, Cromwell's printer, alleged that Milton and Bradshaw had prevailed upon Dugar, editor of the "Eikon" to insert Pamela's prayer, in order to counteract the effect of the book. There is nothing in Milton's character to authorise the belief that he would lend himself to such baseness. How should

he have known that the royal portrait was in the press? Why was it not stopped by the Parliamentarians, who knew of the existence of the manuscript? Acts of arbitrary violence were common enough among those free men, not knaveries: in the secret correspondence between the king and queen, which they intercepted and printed, they made no alteration. Interpolations, falsifications, suppressions, are base means, which the English revolution left for our's.

At any rate, Johnson believed that the text of the "Eikon Basilike" had been interpolated. "As faction," he says, "seldom leaves a man honest, however it might find him, Milton is suspected of having interpolated the book called 'Eikon Basilike,' which the council of state employed him to censure by inserting a prayer taken from Sidney's Arcadia, and imputing it to the King. .... The papers which the King gave to Dr. Juxon on the scaffold the regicides took away, so that they were at least the publishers of this prayer; and Dr. Birch, who examined the question with great care, was inclined to think them the forgers."

For my part, after a close examination of the "Eikon Basilike," I have conceived a different kind of doubt respecting that work. I cannot persuade myself that it proceeded entirely from the pen of Dr. Gauden. That divine probably worked

up notes left by Charles I. The inmost feelings of the soul do not deceive: you cannot put yourself so completely in the place of a man as to reproduce the movements of the mind of that man in such or such a circumstance of his life. It seems to me, for example, that Charles I. alone could have written this series of thoughts:—

"I see it a bad exchange to wound a man's own conscience, thereby to salve state sores; to calm the storms of popular discontents by stirring up a tempest in a man's own bosom. [Charles here reproaches himself with Strafford's death.]

"Blesse me still with reason as a man, with religion as a Christian, and with constancy in justice as a king.

"Thou needest no help, nor shall I, if I may have these; if not to conquer, at least to suffer.

"The events of all wars by the sword being very dubious, and of a civil war uncomfortable; the end hardly recompensing, and late repairing, the mischief of the means,—since, therefore, both in conquering, and being conquered, I am still a sufferer, I beseech thee to give me a double portion of thy spirit.

"Indeed they have left me but little of life, and only the husk and shell as it were.

"If you never see my face again [this was

addressed to his son Charles], and God will have me buried in such a barbarous imprisonment and obscurity; farewell.

"A principal point of your honour will consist in your deferring all respect, love, and protection to your mother, my wife; who hath many ways deserved well of me, and chiefly in this, that, having been a means to blesse me with so many hopefull children, (all which, with their mother, I recommend to your love and care), she hath been content, with incomparable magnanimity and patience, to suffer both for and with me and you.

"When they have destroyed me, as I doubt not but my blood will cry aloud for vengeance to Heaven, so I beseech God not to poure out his wrath upon the generality of the people.

"I had rather you should be Charles le Bon, then le Grand, good then great; I hope God hath designed you to be both.

"Your prerogative is best shewed in remitting rather than exacting the rigour of the laws; there being nothing worse than legall tyrannie.

"Let my memory ever with my name live in you.

"Farewell till we meet, if not on earth, yet in heaven.

"Happy times I hope attend you."

DEFENCE OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE AGAINST SALMASIUS.

SOON afterwards appeared that work of Milton's which gained him most renown in his life-time —his Defence of the English People against a tract by Salmasius in favour of the memory of Charles I. "Those attacks upon a king who is no more," justly and eloquently observes M. Villemain, "those insults beyond the scaffold, had something abject and ferocious, which the enthusiastic mind of Milton was so dazzled by false zeal as not to perceive."

"Defensio pro Populo Anglicano" is written in elegant and classic Latin prose; but Milton appears here merely as a translator of his own thoughts conceived in English, and he thus loses his national originality. All these master-pieces of modern Latinity would excite a smile in the scholars of Rome, if they were to rise from their graves.

Milton first tells Salmasius, that he, Salmasius, knows nothing of Latin: he asks how he could write *persona regia?* Milton affected to carry back in pure Latin the term *persona* to the classic signification, a mask, though Salmasius had in his favour the authority of Varro and Juvenal; but, suddenly rising, he adds:—"Thy expression, Salmasius, is more just than thou imaginest; a tyrant is in reality the mask of a king."

This quarrel about Latin is a common quarrel among scholars; every proficient in Greek and Latin asserts that his neighbour knows not a word of those languages.

"Thou beginnest thy work, Salmasius, with these words:—Horrid news has lately struck our ears! a parricide has been consummated in England! But this horrid news must have a sword much longer than St. Peter's, and thy ears must be of astonishing length, for this news cannot strike any but those of an ass . . . . . O mercenary advocate! couldst thou not address the defence of Charles the father, according to thee the best of defunct kings, to Charles the son, the most needy of all living kings, without charging thy work to this scurvy king? Though thou art a scoundrel, thou wouldst not make thyself ridiculous, and call thy work *Defence of the King*; for, having *sold* thy work, it is no longer *thine*: it belongs to thy

king, who has paid too dearly for it at the rate of one hundred jacobuses, a large sum for that pauper monarch!"

Did not Milton receive from his masters one thousand pounds sterling for his answer to Salmasius?—that is more than one hundred jacobuses. Happily the whole of the defence is not in this tone.

"I am about to treat of important and not common matters: I shall tell how a very potent king, after trampling on the laws of the nation, and giving a shock to religion, ruled according to his will and pleasure, and was at length vanquished on the field of battle by his subjects, who had undergone a long servitude under this king. I shall tell how he was put in prison; how, as he could not give in his words or actions any hope of obtaining from him a better line of conduct, he was finally condemned to death by the supreme council of the kingdom, and beheaded before the very gate of his palace. I shall tell by virtue of what right, and by what laws peculiar to this country, this sentence was pronounced; and I shall easily defend my worthy and valiant countrymen against domestic and foreign calumnies . . . . .

"Nature and the laws would be in danger, if slavery spoke and liberty were mute; if tyrants could find men ready to plead their cause, while those who had conquered could not meet with an

advocate. A deplorable thing, indeed, if reason, the gift of God, with which man is endowed, did not furnish more arguments for the conservation and deliverance of men, than for their oppression and ruin!"

The author then proceeds to direct answers. Salmasius asserts that there had been kings, tyrants, assassinated in their palaces, or slain in popular commotions; but that there was no instance of one having been brought to the scaffold. Milton asks whether it is better to put a prince to death by violence and without trial, than to carry him before a tribunal, where he is not condemned until, like any other citizen, he has been heard in his defence.

Salmasius contends that the law of nature is imprinted in the hearts of men: Milton replies that the right of succession is not a right of nature, that no man is king by the law of nature. He mentions on this occasion all the kings that have been tried, and especially in England. "In an ancient manuscript," says he, "called *Modus tenendi parlamenta*, we read:—'If the king dissolves the parliament before the business for which the council has been summoned is dispatched, he renders himself guilty of perjury, and shall be held to have violated his coronation oath' . . . . Whose fault was it if Charles was condemned? Did he

not take up arms against his subjects? Did he not cause one hundred and fifty-four thousand Protestants in the single province of Ulster, in Ireland, to be slaughtered?"

Hobbes asserts that in the "Defence of the English People" the style is as excellent as the arguments are wretched. Voltaire observed that Salmasius attacks like a pedant, and that Milton replies like a wild beast. "No man," says Johnson, "forgets his original trade; the rights of nations and of kings sink into questions of grammar, if grammarians discuss them."

The "Defence" was translated from the Latin into all the languages of Europe: the name of the English translator is Washington.

The ambassadors of the foreign powers in London were lavish in their compliments to Milton on his *admirable* work,—so delighted are kings with king-killing! Philaras, a native of Athens, and ambassador from the duke of Parma to the king of France, wrote commendations without end to the apologist of the condemnation of Charles I. We have seen ambassadors crawling in Paris at the feet of Bonaparte's secretaries. To say nothing of individuals, diplomatic bodies, which are no longer congenial with the system of new society, frequently serve only to annoy the cabinets

to which they are accredited, and to feed their employers with illusions.

Milton shook with a mighty hand all the ideas agitated in our own age. These ideas slept for one hundred and fifty years, and did not awake until 1789. Might it not be supposed that the political works of the poet were written in our times, on subjects which we see discussed every morning in the public papers!

Salmasius boasted that he had caused Milton to lose his sight, and Milton that he had killed Salmasius. A reply to the latter did not appear till after his death. He there calls Milton *prostitute, fanatical thief, abortion, blear-eyed, purblind, lost man, cheat, debauchee, audacious villain, infernal spirit, infamous impostor;* and declares that he should like to see him tortured, and expire in melted pitch, or in boiling oil. Salmasius does not overlook some Latin verses, in which Milton has blundered in the quantity. In all probability, the wrath of the scholar proceeded less from his horror of regicide than from the lame jokes of Milton upon the Latin of the *Defensio Regia.*

SECOND DEFENCE.

MILTON replied perhaps with still more violence to the pamphlet of Peter Du Moulin's, canon of Canterbury, published by the Rev. Alexander More, "Cry of the Royal Blood to Heaven against the English Regicides." The royalists thought to rouse foreign princes, by calling Cromwell regicide and usurper; they were mistaken: sovereigns are extremely accommodating in regard to usurpations; they feel horror for liberty alone.

Defensio secunda is more interesting for us than the *first*. In this second treatise, Milton passes from the defence of principles to the defence of men. He relates the history of his life, and repels the charges alleged against him. He draws this magnificent picture of the place of his pleading:—

"I seem to overlook, as from the top of a hill, a great extent of sea and land. Spectators crowd around: their unknown faces betray thoughts

similar to my own. Here, Germans, whose masculine spirit disdains servitude; there, French, with a living and generous impetuosity in behalf of liberty; on one side, the composure and valour of the Spaniard; on the other, the reserve and the circumspect magnanimity of the Italian. All the lovers of independence and virtue, the valiant and the sage, in whatever place they may be, are for me. Some favour me in secret, some approve me openly; others welcome me with applause and congratulations; others, again, who had long withstood all conviction, at length yield themselves captive to the force of truth. Surrounded by this multitude, I now imagine that, from the pillars of Hercules to the extremities of the earth, I behold all nations recovering the liberty from which they had been so long exiled; I fancy that I see my countrymen conveying to other lands a plant of superior quality and of nobler growth than that which Triptolemus carried with him from region to region: they are sowing the benefits of civilisation and freedom among cities, kingdoms, and nations. Perhaps I shall not unknown approach this concourse; perhaps I shall be loved by it, when it is told that I am the man who engages in single combat with the proud champion of despotism."

Is not this what is now termed *revolutionary*

propagandism eloquently proclaimed? Milton alone had these ideas; we find no traces of them in the revolutionists of his time. His fiction has been realised: England has spread her principles and the forms of her government over the whole world.

In the discussion of his subject, the author of *Defensio secunda* sketches several historical portraits.

BRADSHAW.

"John Bradshaw, whose name Liberty herself recommends to everlasting remembrance, is descended, as every one knows, from a noble family. Appointed by Parliament to preside at the King's trial, he hesitated not to undertake that office, though full of danger. He united to the knowledge of law, a generous mind, an elevated soul, and irreproachable integrity of morals. He performed his duty with such gravity, firmness, and presence of mind, as to authorise the belief that God, as of old in his admirable providence, had destined him, from the beginning of time, to conduct that trial."

Behold what party-spirit can make of a man! Bradshaw was a lawyer, wordy enough, but of moderate abilities.

FAIRFAX.

"It would be unjust to pass over in silence Fairfax, who joins the greatest courage to the greatest modesty and the utmost holiness of life, and who is an object of the favour of God and nature. These praises are thy just due, though thou art at present withdrawn from the world, as was Scipio of old at Liternum. Thou hast vanquished not only the enemy, but ambition, but glory, which have overcome so many illustrious mortals. The purity of thy virtues, the splendour of thy actions, consecrate the sweet repose which thou enjoyest, and which constitutes the desired recompense of the labours of men. Such was the repose which the heroes of antiquity possessed after a life of glory: the poets, at a loss for ideas and expressions capable of describing the peace of those warriors, said that they were received into heaven and admitted to the banquets of the gods. But, be the causes of thy retirement what they may, whether health, which I take to be the principal one, or any other motive, I am convinced that nothing could have induced thee to abandon the service of thy country, hadst thou not known that in thy successor freedom would find a protector, and England a refuge and a pillar of glory."

The efforts of Milton are obvious: he calls up the poetry of history to mask the real cause of the retirement of Fairfax—the trial of Charles I. Every body knows the farce which Cromwell caused to be acted about this honest but weak man.

CROMWELL.

Milton first speaks of the gentle birth of the Protector: birth plays an important part in the republican ideas of the poet, himself a gentleman.

"It would be impossible for me to enumerate all the towns that he has taken, all the battles that he has won. The whole surface of the British empire has been the scene of his exploits, the theatre of his triumphs..... To thee our country owes its liberties; thou couldst not bear a title more useful and more august than that of author, guardian, preserver, of our freedom. Not only hast thou eclipsed the actions of all our kings, but those also which are recorded of our fabulous heroes. Reflect often on the dear pledge which the land of thy birth hath commited to thy care: liberty, which she formerly hoped to obtain from the flower of talents and virtues, she now expects from thee; she flatters herself that she shall obtain it from thee alone. Honour the high

expectation, the only hope, which thy country now rests on thee. Respect the sight and the sufferings of so many brave men, who, under thy banner, have so bravely fought for freedom; respect the shades of those who perished in that struggle; respect the opinions and the hopes formed of us by foreign nations, which promise themselves such great things from our liberty so gloriously acquired, the loss of which, should it untimely perish like an abortion, would plunge this country into the lowest depths of disgrace; finally, respect thyself; and, having encountered every hardship and every danger for the acquisition of this liberty, let it not be violated by thyself, or impaired in the smallest degree by others. Thou canst not thyself be free, unless we are free too; for it is the ordinance of Nature that the man who invades the liberty of others must first lose his own."

Milton could have written history as well as Livy and Thucydides. Johnson refers only to the praise bestowed on the Protector by the poet, in order to convict the republican of inconsistency: the admirable passage just quoted shows what formed the counterpoise to those praises. In the days of Bonaparte's omnipotence, who durst have told him that he had obtained supreme power solely to protect liberty? Yet Milton had done

better, if he had imitated some staunch democrats, who kept aloof from Cromwell and always considered him as a tyrant; but Milton was no democrat.

On these works, now almost completely forgotten, was founded the reputation of this great writer during his lifetime—a sad reputation, which embittered his days, and which was uncheered by the imperishable renown awarded to his memory since his death. Every thing that springs from party violence and the passions of the moment dies like them and with them.

The reactions of the Restoration in England were much more vehement than the reactions of the Restoration in France, because convictions were deeper, and characters more decided. The return of the Bourbons has not stifled the reputations of the republic or the empire, as the return of the Stuarts stifled the renown of Milton. It is, however, but right to remark that, as the poet wrote most of his disquisitions in Latin, they remained inaccessible to the multitude.

LIBERATION OF GREECE.

As he had demanded the liberty of the press, so the English Homer performed a filial duty in advocating the emancipation of Greece. Camoens had previously exclaimed: "And we leave Greece in slavery!" Milton wrote to Philaras that "he should delight to see the army and fleet of England engaged in delivering Greece, the native land of eloquence, from Ottoman tyranny:"—*ad liberandam ab Ottomanico tyranno Græciam eloquentiæ patriam.*

Had this wish been fulfilled, the finest monument of antiquity would still exist. It was not till 1682 that the Venetians caused the explosion which blew up part of the temple of Minerva; Cromwell would have preserved the Parthenon, the ruins only of which were rifled by Lord Elgin. Here again Milton had one of those ideas which belong to the present generation, and which has produced its fruit in our own days.

The translator of Milton will take leave to pay him the homage of a few lines which paved the way to the deliverance of Greece.

"The question is, whether Sparta and Athens shall be resuscitated, or whether they shall continue for ever buried in their dust. Woe to the age which can be a passive spectator of an heroic struggle; which conceives that it can, without danger, as without penetration into the future, suffer a nation to be immolated! This error, or rather this crime, would be visited sooner or later by the severest punishment.

"Narrow and detestable minds, which conceive, precisely because an injustice is consummated that it has no baneful consequence, are the pest of states. What was the first reproach addressed from abroad in 1789, to the monarchical government of France? It was that it had winked at the partition of Poland. This partition, by breaking down the barrier that separated the North and the East from the South and the West of Europe, opened the way for the armies which alternately occupied Vienna and Berlin, Moscow and Paris.

"An immoral Policy applauds herself for a transient success: she fancies herself clever, skilful, subtle; she listens with ironical disdain to the voice of conscience and the counsels of integrity.

But, whilst she proceeds and deems herself triumphant, she feels herself suddenly detained by the veils in which she has wrapped herself: she turns her head, and finds herself face to face with an avenging revolution, which has silently followed her. You will not grasp the suppliant hand of Greece? Well then. her dying hand will mark you with a bloody stain, that future times may recognise and punish you*."

In the Chamber of Peers I carried an amendment to prevent the victims transported from the Morea from being any longer sold in Egypt under the French flag.

"Considered with reference to the affairs of the world," I said, "my amendment is free from every, even the slightest, inconvenience. The generic term which I employ applies to no particular nation. I have thrown over the Greek the mantle of the slave, that he may not be recognised, and that the signs of his wretchedness may render at least his person inviolable to the charity of the Christian.

"I read yesterday a letter from a boy of fifteen, dated from the ramparts of Missolonghi. 'My dear comrade,' he wrote, in his simple manner, to

* Preface to the Author's "Travels in Greece, Palestine," &c. in the edition of his "Complete Works," 1826.

one of his young associates in Zante, 'I have been wounded three times, but my companions and myself are sufficiently recovered to be able to resume our musquets. If we had provisions, we should defy an enemy thrice as numerous. Ibrahim is beneath our walls: he has sent us proposals and threats: we scorn both. Ibrahim has French officers with him. What have we done to the French to be thus treated?'

"Gentlemen, shall this youth be taken, and carried by Christians to the slave-market of Alexandria? If he shall still have occasion to ask what he has done to the French, let our amendment step in to satisfy the inquiry of his despair, the cry of his wretchedness, that we may have it in our power to reply, 'No, it is not the flag of St. Louis that protects your slavery; much rather would it cover your noble wounds.'

"Peers of France, Ministers of the most Christian King, if we cannot assist unhappy Greece by our arms, let us at least separate ourselves by our laws from the crimes which are committed there: let us set a noble example, which will perhaps pave the way in Europe to a policy more elevated, more humane, more conformable to religion, and more worthy of an enlightened age; and it is to you, gentlemen, to France, that the

honour of having originated this noble measure will be due*."

The battle of Navarino completed the fulfilment of Milton's wish.

* Speech in the Chamber of Peers, March 13, 1826, and Reply to the Keeper of the Seals.

MILTON'S BLINDNESS.—HIS DESPATCHES.

HUME was, I believe, the first who noticed Whitelocke's expression relative to Milton in his office of secretary to the council of state. "One Milton, a blind man, employed to translate into Latin a treaty between Sweden and England." "These forms of expression," adds the historian, "are amusing to posterity, who consider how obscure Whitelocke himself, though lord-keeper and ambassador, and indeed a man of great abilities and merits, has become in comparison of Milton."

An ambassador having complained to Cromwell of the delay of a diplomatic answer, the Protector replied: "The secretary has not yet prepared it, because, being blind, he proceeds slowly." "What!" rejoined the ambassador, "have ye not been able to find in all England any but a blind man capable of writing Latin properly?" Cromwell, from an instinct of glory, discovered the latent glory of Milton, and bound the renown of the hero to that

of the poet. Cromwell having Milton for secretary is a remarkable trait in the history of the world.

Milton wrote the eight well-known lines, which Cromwell sent with his portrait to Christina of Sweden, concluding with the verse:—

Nec sunt hi vultus regibus usque truces.*

The notes of the cabinet of St. James's had been hitherto written in French; Milton drew them up in Latin, and wished to make that the universal language of diplomacy: in this design he failed. The French has generally recovered the ascendency, on account of its clearness; but the national pride of the cabinet of London now causes its official correspondence to be carried on in English, which renders it perplexed, as I know from experience.

Cromwell died. Death is fond of glory. The shackles which the Protector had imposed upon opinion were broken. If it be possible to kill

* Cowper gives the following version of those lines:—

"Christina, maiden of heroic mien,
Star of the North, of northern stars the queen,
Behold what wrinkles I have earned, and how
The iron casque still chafes my veteran brow,
While following Fate's dark footsteps, I fulfil
The dictates of a hardy people's will.
But, softened in thy sight, my looks appear
Not to all queens or kings alike severe."

TRANSLATOR.

liberty for a few days she revives. Christ burst the chains of death, in spite of the Roman guard which kept watch at his sepulchre. The nominal accession of Richard to his father's power was communicated to the foreign sovereigns. In the collection of Milton's letters are found those which he addressed to the court of France. Such despatches are a monument, from the nature of the facts, and from the nature of the persons. The author of "Paradise Lost" thus writes, in the name of Cromwell's son, to Louis XIV. and Cardinal Mazarine.

"RICHARD, Protector of the Commonwealth of England, &c. to the Most Serene and Potent Prince, LEWIS, King of France.

"Most Serene and Potent King, our Friend and Confederate,—So soon as our most serene father, Oliver, Protector of the Commonwealth of England, by the will of God so ordaining, departed this life upon the third of September, we, being lawfully declared his successor in the supreme magistracy, though in the extremity of tears and sadness, could do no less than, with the first opportunity, by these our letters, make known a matter of this concernment to your Majesty, by whom, as you have been a most cordial friend to our father and this Republic, we are confident the mournful and

unexpected tidings will be as sorrowfully received. Our business now is to request your Majesty, that you would have such an opinion of us, as of one who has determined nothing more religiously and constantly than to observe the friendship and confederacy contracted between your Majesty and our renowned father, and with the same zeal and good-will to confirm and establish the leagues by him concluded, and to carry on the same counsels and interests with your Majesty. To which intent it is our pleasure that our ambassador residing at your court be empowered by the same commission as formerly; and that you will give the same credit to what he transacts in our name as if it had been done by ourselves. In the mean time we wish your Majesty all prosperity.

"From our Court at Whitehall,
"Sept. 5, 1658."

"To the Most Eminent Lord, Cardinal Mazarine.

"Tho' nothing could fall out more bitter and grievous to us than to write the mournful news of our most serene and most renowned father's death; nevertheless, in regard we cannot be ignorant of the high esteem which he had for your eminency, and the great value which you had for

him; nor have any reason to doubt but that your eminency, upon whose care the prosperity of France depends, will no less bewail the loss of your constant friend and most united confederate; we thought it of great moment, by these our letters, to make known this accident so deeply to be lamented, as well to your eminency as to the king; and to assure your eminency, which is but reason, that we shall most religiously observe all those things which our father, of most serene memory, was bound by the league to see confirmed and ratified: and shall make it our business that, in the midst of your mourning for a friend so faithful and flourishing in all virtuous applause, there may be nothing wanting to preserve the faith of our confederacy. For the conservation of which, on your part also, to the good of both nations, may God Almighty long preserve your eminency.

"Westminster, Sept. 1658."

Milton is here a great historian of the history of France and England! It is curious to see Richard make, like one who had long been heir to the three crowns, his preparations for reigning. Milton wrote, in the name of a man invested with power for a few hours, to a young sovereign, who was destined to lead his great-grandson, by uncontrolled monarchy, to the scaffold of the first Charles.

This scaffold at Whitehall was converted into a throne, when royal blood had dyed it crimson, and the Protector seated himself upon it. France, under the grandson of Henry IV., was about to rise as much as England was doomed to sink under Charles II. and his brother. Glory must always be somewhere: when she flew from the head of Cromwell, she settled on that of Louis XIV.

Louis XIV. wore mourning for a regicide, and it was the bard who sang the deeds of Satan, the republican apologist of the death of Charles I., the enemy of kings and of Catholics, who acquainted the absolute monarch, the author of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, with the death of Oliver, the Protector.

What here appears to be contrast is harmony; high reputations mingle, like children of the same family. Between all truly great characters there is an affinity: two persons of similar sentiments, but of unequal minds, have a stronger antipathy to one another, than two men of superior minds, though adverse in opinions and conduct.

RICHARD CROMWELL.

MILTON'S OPINIONS CONCERNING THE COMMONWEALTH, TITHES, AND PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

WHILE Milton was, in Richard's name, reminding the sovereigns and their ministers of the tender love and the profound admiration which they felt for the judge of a king, factions began to revive in England. Governments which depend on the existence of a single man fall with that man; the effect ceases with the cause. The old republican party in the army roused itself: the officers whom Cromwell had displaced united together. Lambert put himself at the head of the *good old cause*. Threatened by the officers, Richard had the weakness to dissolve the House of Commons; the House of Lords was a cipher.

Aristocratic assemblies reign gloriously, when they are invested, *de jure* or *de facto*, with the supreme power: they offer the strongest guarantees to liberty, order, and property; but, in mixed

governments, they lose a great part of their value, and are contemptible whenever a great political crisis arrives. Never have they averted such a crisis. Weak against the king, they prevent not despotism; weak against the people, they obviate not anarchy. Ever liable to be broken up in popular commotions, they purchase their existence only at the price of their perjuries and their slavery. Did the House of Lords save Charles I.? Did it save Richard Cromwell, to whom it took the oath of allegiance? Did it save James II.? Will it save in our days the Princes of Hanover? Will it save itself? These aristocratic counterpoises, as they are called, only serve to embarrass the balance, and will sooner or later be thrown out of the scale. An ancient and wealthy aristocracy, accustomed to public speaking and public business, has but one way of retaining power when it is slipping out of its grasp; that is, to pass over gradually to democracy, and to place itself insensibly at its head, unless it deems that it is strong enough to play at the game of civil war—a terrible game!

Soon after the dissolution of the House of Commons, Richard abdicated: he was crushed by the renown of Oliver. Detesting the military yoke, he had not strength to shake it off; without any conviction, he cared for nothing; he suffered

his guards to rob him of his dinner, and England to go all alone; he took away two large trunks full of those addresses and congratulations customary with all servile men in honour of all men in power. In these addresses he was told that God had given him the supreme authority for the *happiness* of the three kingdoms. "What have you in those trunks?" said some one to him. "The *happiness* of the English nation," he replied, with a laugh.

The council of officers was called the Rump. The Rump immediately attacked the military authority which had restored it to life. Lambert, as usual, beset the Commons. The Parliament being dissolved, the people, in token of rejoicing, made bonfires in the public streets of heaps of the rumps of various animals. Monck appeared, and every thing indicated the Restoration.

What did Milton during this social decomposition? Seeing liberty compelled to fall back, still dreaming of the Commonwealth, forgetting that there are moments when the pen is of no avail, he published a pamphlet on "The Ready and Easy Way to establish a free Commonwealth." In rapid survey, he reviews what the English had done to abolish monarchy:—

"For this extolled and magnified nation," he says, "regardless both of honour won and deliver-

ances vouchsafed from Heaven, to fall back, or rather, to creep back, so poorly, as it seems the multitude would, to their once abjured and detested thraldom of kingship . . . . . to throw away and forsake, or rather to betray a just and noble cause . . . . . and by thus relapsing to verify all the bitter predictions of our triumphing enemies, who will now think they wisely discerned and justly censured both us and all our actions as rash, rebellious, hypocritical, and impious; not only argues a strange degenerate contagion suddenly spread among us, fitted and prepared for new slavery, but will render us a scorn and derision to all our neighbours. . . . . Besides this, if we return to kingship, and soon repent (as undoubtedly we shall, when we begin to find the old encroachments coming on by little and little upon our consciences), we may be forced perhaps to fight over again all that we have fought, and spend over again all that we have spent, but are never like to attain thus far as we are now advanced to the recovery of our freedom, never to have it in our possession as we now have it, never to be vouchsafed hereafter the like mercies and signal assistances from heaven in our cause, if by our ungrateful backsliding we make these fruitless; flying now to regal concessions from his divine condescensions and gracious answers to our once

importuning prayers against the tyranny which we then groaned under; making vain and viler than dirt the blood of so many thousand faithful and valiant Englishmen, who left us in this liberty, bought with their lives; losing by a strange after-game of folly all the battles we had won.

A king must be adored like a demi-god, with a dissolute and haughty court about him, of vast expense and luxury, masks and revels, to the debauching of our prime gentry, both male and female, . . . to the multiplying of a servile crew, not of servants only, but of nobility and gentry, bred up then to the hopes, not of public, but of court offices, to be stewards, chamberlains, ushers, grooms . . . . . and the lower their minds debased with court opinions, contrary to all virtue and reformation, the haughtier will be their pride and profusion."

The penetrating mind of Milton gave him a glimpse of futurity; he foresaw the long contest which the people would have to maintain in order to re-conquer what they were about to lose: nay, it was not till these last days that England has recovered the ground which this great poet-politician defended inch by inch. And that king, "with a dissolute and haughty court about him," whom the author of "Paradise Lost" so accurately delineated beforehand, was ready to land at Dover.

Some months before the appearance of this work he had published two treatises,—the first "On Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Cases," and the second on the "Means of removing Hirelings out of the Church," in which he investigates the subject of the tithes, dues, and revenues of the Church; and expresses his doubts whether the ministers of the establishment can be maintained by the power of the law.

His opinion on parliamentary reform deserves to be quoted.

"If we give a right to all to elect any body, it will not be wisdom and authority, but turbulence and gluttony, that will soon raise the vilest miscreants of our taverns and sinks of debauchery, of our towns and villages, to the rank and dignity of senator. Who would entrust the affairs of the Commonwealth to persons whom no man would entrust with his own private affairs. Who would like to see the treasure of the State committed to the care of those who have squandered their own fortune in disgraceful prodigality? Ought they to have the charge of the people's purse who would soon convert it into their own purse? Are they qualified to be the legislators of a whole nation who know not what is law or reason, just or unjust, straight or crooked, lawful or unlawful; those who think that all power consists in outrage, all

dignity in insolence; who neglect no means to gratify the corruption of their friends, or the keenness of their resentments; who disperse their kindred and their creatures over the country to levy the taxes, and to confiscate property?—men the most base and degraded, who buy themselves what they pretend to put up to sale, whence they amass exorbitant wealth diverted from the public coffers. They plunder the country, and emerge in a moment from poverty and rags into a state of affluence and splendour. Who could endure such scoundrels of servants, such vicegerents of their masters? Who could conceive that the leaders of robbers should be fitted to preserve liberty? Who could suppose that he had become a hair's breadth more free for such a race of functionaries—they might amount to five hundred, elected after this fashion by the shires and boroughs—when, among those who ought to be the true guardians of liberty, there are so many who know neither how to use nor how to enjoy that liberty, and who comprehend neither the principles nor the merits of that right*."

Nothing stronger has ever been urged against par-

* After a careful search through Milton's prose works, the Translator has been unable to discover this passage, and he has been, in consequence, obliged to give it diluted by a double translation, instead of quoting the nervous original language of the great author.—TRANSLATOR.

liamentary reform. Cromwell had tried this reform, and was soon obliged to dissolve the Parliament, which was the result of an extension of the right of election. But what was true in Milton's time is not equally true now-a-days. The disproportion between the landed proprietors and popular classes is not so great. The progress of education and civilisation has begun to render the electors of the middle class better qualified to judge of interests which, formerly, they did not comprehend. The England of the present age has been able, though not without peril, to confer rights on a class of citizens, who in the seventeenth century would have overturned the State if the House of Commons had been opened to them.

Thus all the questions, both general and particular, agitated at the present day among the nations of the continent and in the English Parliament, were discussed and resolved by Milton, in the same spirit in which the present age is resolving them; nay, he even created the modern constitutional language; the terms *functionaries*, *decrees*, *motions*, &c. are his. What then was that genius, capable of creating at once a new world and a new language in politics and poesy.

THE RESTORATION.

MILTON ARRESTED, AND SET AT LIBERTY.—THE POET'S FIDELITY TO CROMWELL.

MILTON had the mortification of seeing the son of Charles I. restored to the throne; not that the poet's firm heart was dismayed, but his chimeras of Republican Liberty vanished; every chimera thus dispelled gives pain, and leaves a void. Charles II., in his Declaration of Breda, announced a general pardon, leaving it for the Commons to except unworthy objects. The instances of sanguinary vengeance which occurred under the Stuarts and the House of Hanover cannot be imputed to the Crown; they were the work of the houses of Parliament. Bodies of men are more implacable than individuals, because they include more passions, and are less responsible.

At the return of Charles II., Milton retired from his situation as Latin Secretary, and left his home in Petty France, where, for eight years, he had received such homage. He withdrew to the

house of a friend, in Bartholomew Close, near West Smithfield. Proceedings were commenced against the "Defence of the English People," and the "Eiconoclastes." On the 27th of June, 1660, Parliament ordered that the author of those works should be arrested. At first he could not be found; but a few months afterwards he was in the hands of the Sergeant at Arms. He was, however, soon released. In December of the same year, he had the boldness to address this terrible Parliament, who fancied that it had treated him generously in not bringing him to the block. He exclaimed against the exorbitant fees demanded by the Sergeant, and thought himself more outraged by the privation of liberty than he would have been by the loss of life.

The Journals of the House of Commons contain two entries relative to this subject. The first, dated Saturday, December 15th, 1660, records the Resolution of the House, that Mr. Milton, then in the custody of the Sergeant at Arms, be liberated, on paying the fees.

The other, dated Monday, December 17th, 1660, states that, a complaint having been made that the Sergeant at Arms has demanded excessive fees, for the detention of Mr. Milton, the House resolved, that he be referred to the Committee of Privileges, for the investigation of this affair.

Davenant saved Milton—an honourable episode

in the History of the Muses, on which I formerly scribbled some execrable doggrel. Cunningham gives another version of the poet's deliverance. He pretends that Milton gave himself out for dead, and that his obsequies were celebrated. Charles II. would have applauded the artifice of a man who escaped death by feigning it. The character of the author of the "Defence," as well as the records of history, forbid us to believe this anecdote. Milton was forgotten, in the retreat where he had buried himself; and to that oblivion we owe "Paradise Lost." If Cromwell had lived ten years longer, as M. Mosneron observes, his Secretary would never have been thought of. The rejoicings for the Restoration over, the illuminations extinguished, next came its punishments. Charles had charged his Commons with all responsibility of that nature, and they were not sparing of violent re-actions. Cromwell was disinterred, and his body hung, as if they hoisted the flag of his glory on the posts of a gibbet. History has preserved in her archives the receipt of the mason who was ordered to break open the tomb of the Protector, and who received the sum of fifteen shillings for his pains.

"May the 4th, 1661, recd. then in full of the worshipful Sergeant Norforke, fiveteen shillinges, for taking up the corpes of Cromwell, Ierton, and Brassaw. "Rec. by me, John Lewis."

Milton alone remained faithful to the memory of Cromwell. While minor authors, vile, perjured, bought by restored power, insulted the ashes of a great man at whose feet they had grovelled, Milton gave him an asylum in his genius, as in an inviolable temple.

Milton might have been reinstated in office. His third wife (for he espoused two after the death of Mary Powell) beseeching him to accept his former place as Secretary, he replied, "You are a woman, and would like to keep your carriage; but I will die an honest man."

Remaining a Republican, he wrapped himself in his principles, with his Muse and his poverty. He said to those who reproached him with having served a tyrant, "He delivered us from kings." Milton affirmed that he had only fought for the cause of God and of his country.

One day, walking in St. James's Park, he suddenly heard repeated near him, "The king! the king!" "Let us withdraw," he said to his guide, "I never loved kings." Charles II. accosted the blind man. "Thus, Sir, has Heaven punished you for having conspired against my father." Sire," he replied, "if the ills that afflict us in this world be the chastisements for our faults, your father must have been very guilty."

NEW WORKS OF MILTON.

HIS LATIN DICTIONARY—HIS MUSCOVY—HIS HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

THE season most favourable to the inspirations of Milton was autumn, as being most congenial with the melancholy gravity of his thoughts. He says, however, somewhere, that he revives in spring. He believed that he was visited, at night, by a heavenly female. He had three daughters by Mary Powell; one of them, Deborah, read to him Isaiah in Hebrew, Homer in Greek, and Ovid in Latin, without understanding any of these languages. This anecdote is disputed by Johnson. That Milton was as great a scholar as a poet we see by his writing in Latin as fluently as in English; he composed Greek verses, witness some of his minor pieces. It was from the original text of the Prophets that he derived their fire. The lyre of Tasso was not unknown to him. He spoke nearly all the living languages of Europe.

Antonio Francini, a Florentine, expresses himself with regard to Milton, as if the Poet of Albion, while journeying through Italy, had been in the full enjoyment of his fame.

"Another Babel would for him confuse tongues in vain; for, England! besides thy most noble idiom, he is master of Spanish, French, Tuscan, Greek, and Latin."

Milton, towards the end of the Protectorate, began seriously to compose "Paradise Lost;" and, at the same time, with this work of the Muses, he laboured on History, Logic, and Grammar. He collected, in three folio volumes, materials for a new *Thesaurus Linguæ Latinæ*, which was used by the Editors of the "Cambridge Dictionary," printed in 1693. We have a Latin Grammar of his, for children. Bossuet wrote a Catechism for the little boys at Meaux. The author of "Paradise Lost" was engrossed by the subject of his poem. Even in the "Tractate on Education," addressed to Hartlib, in 1650, he says, "The end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright." These works, which would have done honour to a Ducange, or to a Benedictine of the congregation of St. Maur, fatigued not the genius of Milton; they did not even suffice it. Like Leibnitz, he embraced History in his researches. His "Moscovia"

is an amusing abridgment, from the little details which it gives, in the nature of Travels:—

"The north parts of this country are so barren, that the inhabitants fetch their corn a thousand miles, and so cold in winter, that the very sap of their wood-fuel burning on the fire freezes at the brand's end where it drops. The mariners which were left on ship-board in the first English voyage thither, in going up only from the cabins to the hatches, had their breath so congealed by the cold, that they fell down as it were stifled.

"Moscow hath a fair castle, four-square, upon a hill, two miles about, with brick walls very high, and some say eighteen foot thick, sixteen gates, and as many bulwarks. In the castle are kept the chief markets, and in winter on the river, being then firm ice. This river Moscua on the south-west side incloses the castle, wherein are nine fair churches, with round gilded towers, and the emperor's palace, which neither within nor without is equal for state to the king's houses in England, but rather like our buildings of old fashion, small windows, some of glass, some with latices or iron bars."

This was the Kremlin, whence the fortune of Bonaparte took flight.

The "History of England," by Milton, consists of six books. It comes down no lower than the

battle of Hastings. The heptarchy, whatever Hume may say, is very clearly depicted. The style of this work is manly, simple; and it is interspersed with reflections, nearly always relating to the time in which the historian wrote. The third book opens with a description of the state of society in Great Britain, at the period when the Romans left the island. He compares this state with that of England when she found herself deserted by rightful power, during the reign of Charles I. At the end of the fifth book, Milton deduces the causes which threw the Anglo-Saxons under the Norman yoke; he asks if the same causes of corruption may not again reduce his countrymen under the yoke of superstition and tyranny.

The imagination of the poet disdains not the fabulous origins of the Britons; he devotes many pages to the reigns of those monarchs of romance, who ruled England from Brutus, the great grandson of Æneas, to Cassibelaunus. In his way he meets with King Leir or Lear.

"Leir, who next reigned, had only three daughters, and no male issue; governed laudably, and built Caer-Leir, now Leicestre, on the bank of the Sora. But, at last, failing through age, he determines to bestow his daughters, and so among them to divide his kingdom. Yet first, to try which of them loved him best (a trial that might

have made him, had he known as wisely how to to try, as he seem'd to know how much the trying behoov'd him), he resolves a simple resolution, to ask them solemly in order; and which of them should profess largest, her to beleev. Gonorill the eldest, apprehending too well her father's weakness, makes answer, invoking heav'n, *that she loved him above her soul.* Therefore, quoth the old man, overjoyed, since thou so honour'st my declin'd age, to thee and the husband whom thou shalt choose I give the third part of my realm. So fair a speeding, for a few words soon uttered, was to Regan, the second, ample instruction what to say. She on the same demand spares no protesting, and the gods must witness, that otherwise to express her thoughts she knew not, but that she loved him *above all creatures;* and so receives an equal reward with her sister. But Cordeilla, the youngest, though hitherto best beloved, and now before her eyes the rich and present hire of a little easie soothing, the danger also, and the loss likely to betide plain dealing, yet moves not from the solid purpose of a sincere and vertuous answer. *Father*, saith she, *my love towards you is as my duty bids,—what can a father seek, what can a child promise more? They who pretend beyond this flatter.*

"When the old man, sorry to hear this, and

wishing her to recall those words, persisted asking, with a loiall sadness at her father's infirmity, but something on the sudden, harsh, and glancing rather at her sisters than speaking her own mind, Two waies only, saith she, I have to answer what you require mee; the former, your command is, I should recant; accept then this other which is left me; look how much you *have*, so much is your *value*, and so much I love you. Then, hear thou, quoth Leir, now all in passion, what thy ingratitude hath gained thee: because thou hast not reverenc'd thy aged father equall to thy sisters—part in my kingdom, or what else is mine, reck'n to have *none*. And without delay gives in marriage his other daughters; Gonorill to Maglaunus Duke of Albania, Regan to Herminus Duke of Cornwall, with them in present half his kingdom; the rest to follow at his death.

"In the mean while, Fame was not sparing to divulge the wisdom and other graces of Cordeilla, insomuch that Aganippus, a great king in Gaul (however he came by his Greek name) seeks her to wife, and, nothing alter'd at the loss of her dowry, receaves her gladly in such manner as she was sent. After this, King Leir, more and more drooping with years, became an easy prey to his daughters and thir husbands; who now by daily encroachments had seis'd the whole kingdom into thir hands,

and the old king is put to sojorn with his eldest daughter, attended only by three-score knights. But they, in a short while grudg'd at, as too numerous and disorderly for continual guests, are reduced to thirty. Not brooking that affront, the old king betakes him to his second daughter; but, there also discord soon arising between the servants of differing masters in one family five only are suffered to attend him. Then back again he returns to the other; hoping that she his eldest could not but have more pity on his gray hairs; but she now refuses to admitt him, unless he be content with one only of his followers. At last, the remembrance of his youngest, Cordeilla, comes to his thoughts, and now, acknowledging how true her words had bin, tho' with little hope from whom he had so injured, be it but to pay her the last recompence she can have from him, his confession of her wise forewarning, that so perhaps his misery, the proof and experiment of her wisdom, might something soften her, he takes his journey into France. Now might be seen a difference between the silent or downright-spok'n affection of som children to thir parents, and the talkative obsequiousness of others; while the hope of inheritance over-acts them, and on the tongue's end enlarges their duty Cordeilla, out of meer love, without the suspicion of expected reward, at the

message only of her father in distress, pours forth true filial tears. And, not enduring either that her own or any other eye should see him in such forlorn condition as his messenger declared, discreetly appoints one of her trusted servants, first to convey him privately toward some good sea town, there to array him, bathe him, cherish him, furnish him with such attendance and state as beseem'd his dignity. That then, as from his first landing, he might send word of his arrival to her husband Aganippus. Which don with all mature and requisite contrivance, Cordeilla, with the king her husband, and all the barony of his realm, who then first had news of his passing the sea, goe out to meet him; and, after all honourable and joyfull entertainment, Aganippus, as to his wives father and his royall guest, surrenders him during his abode there the power and disposal of his whole dominion; permitting his wife Cordeilla to go with an army, and set her father upon his throne. Wherein her piety so prospered, as that she vanquishd her impious sisters with those dukes, and Leir again, as saith the story, three years obtained the crown. To whom, dying, Cordeilla with all regal solemnities gave burial in the town of Leicestre. And, then as right heir succeeding, and her husband dead, rul'd the land five years in peace. Untill Marganus and Cune-

dagius, her two sisters' sons, not bearing that a kingdom should be governed by a woman, in the unseasonablest time to raise that quarrel against a woman so worthy, make war against her, depose her, and imprison her; of which impatient, now long unexercised to suffer, she there, as is related, kills herself *."

It would be impossible to preserve the charm of the original in a translation. The narrator renders his style as antique as those of the chronicles whence he draws the recital. I had need reproduce the story of King Lear in the language of Froissart. Milton delighted to wrestle with Shakspeare, as Jacob with the angel.

* The History of Britain, that part especially now called England. From the first traditional beginning continued to the Norman Conquest. Collected out of the ancientest and best authours thereof, by John Milton. London: printed by J. M. for James Allestry, at the Rose and Crown, in St. Paul's Church Yard, M.D.C.L.X.X.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF MILTON.

PLOT OF PARADISE LOST.

THIS was not all. The poetical compositions of Milton were as gigantic as his prose studies. They were not the fantastic visions of fruitful mediocrity, whose verses flow as easily as its words; whether he quitted the lyre for the pen, or the pen for the lyre, Milton, always, in some way, augmented the harvest of posterity. One would think that he had resolved, like certain fathers of the Church, to turn the whole Bible into tragedies. The poet's manuscripts are preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. Among these papers are to be found the titles of thirty-six tragedies, to be taken from the History of England, from Vortigern to Edward the Confessor; and forty-eight to be founded on Holy Writ.

Some notes, beginnings of speeches, songs, and characters, are frequently added to these titles. Among the sacred subjects chosen by Milton, I

remarked that of Athaliah. Milton could not have surpassed Racine; but it would have been curious to see how this manly genius would have conducted the action which has produced the master-piece of our stage.

Could the republican poet have given kings warnings more noble and severe than did our royalist?

> Rear'd far from courts, alas! thou knowest not
> The poisoning charms of royal dignity;
> Know'st not the spells of arbitrary power,
> Or the enchanting voice of parasites.
> Soon they will tell thee that the holiest laws,
> Made to control the rabble, bow to kings;
> That will alone should be the monarch's curb;
> That he should sacrifice whate'er would thwart
> His sovereign majesty; that toil and tears
> Must be the people's lot; that he must rule them
> With iron sceptre; for, if not oppress'd
> Sooner or later they become oppressors.

Milton had also formed the design of translating Homer.

Here are two plans for Paradise Lost, as a tragedy, as they exist in the poet's hand-writing, among the manuscripts of Trinity College.

THE PERSONS.

MICHAEL.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

HEAVENLY LOVE.
LUCIFER.
ADAM, EVE } with the Serpent.
CONSCIENCE.
DEATH.
LABOUR.
SICKNESS.
DISCONTENT.
IGNORANCE. } Mutes.
FAITH.
HOPE.
CHARITY.

THE PERSONS.

MOSES.
DIVINE JUSTICE, WISDOM, HEAVENLY LOVE.
THE EVENING STAR, HESPERUS.
CHORUS OF ANGELS.
LUCIFER.
ADAM.
EVE.
CONSCIENCE.
LABOUR.
SICKNESS.
DISCONTENT.
IGNORANCE.
FEAR.
DEATH. } Mutes.
FAITH.
HOPE.
CHARITY.

PARADISE LOST.

THE PERSONS.

Moses προλογιζει, recounting how he assumed his true body; that it corrupts not, because it is with God in the mount; declares the like of Enoch and Eliah; besides the purity of the place, that certain pure winds, dews, and clouds, preserve it from corruption; whence exhorts to the sight of God; tells they cannot see Adam in the state of innocence, by reason of their sin.

JUSTICE
MERCY } debating what should become of man, if he fall.
WISDOM

CHORUS OF ANGELS, singing a hymn of the Creation.

ACT II.

HEAVENLY LOVE.
EVENING STAR.
CHORUS, sing the marriage-song, and describe Paradise.

ACT III.

LUCIFER contriving Adam's ruin.
CHORUS, fears for Adam, & relates Lucifer's rebellion & fall.

ACT IV.

ADAM } fallen.
EVE }
CONSCIENCE cites them to God's examination.
CHORUS bewails and tells the good Adam has lost.

ACT V.

ADAM and EVE driven out of Paradise.
. . presented by an Angel with
LABOUR, GRIEF, HATRED, ENVY, WAR, FAMINE, PESTILENCE, SICKNESS, DISCONTENT, IGNORANCE, FEAR, DEATH. } Mutes.
To whom he gives their names, likewise
WINTER, HEAT, TEMPEST, &c.
TRUTH, HOPE, CHARITY } comfort and instruct him.
CHORUS briefly concludes.

Such was Milton's first design, in which most of the supernatural personages of Paradise Lost are replaced by allegorical ones. Lucifer, in the tragedy, projects the ruin of Adam, as Satan contrives it in the poem; but all the great scenes in hell are suppressed, as well as those in Heaven; here are not displayed the councils, held in the Abyss; we hear not the oracles of the Father, the speeches of the Son on the Sacred Mountain. The Drama could not have admitted these developments of the Epopee. The Chorus relates the rebellion and fall of Lucifer; but it is evident that this could only have been done in a very brief way; not in a long recital, like that of Raphael. In the tragedy, Heavenly Love and the Evening Star sing the nuptial song; in the

poem, the bard himself does so. One may regret the song of the Star, and imagine its beauty. But Milton could do nothing without evincing genius. Witness this remarkable point thrown into a simple note. The angel presents to Adam after his fall all the calamities of earth, from Toil to Death. Adam, the sinner, names *them*, as, in his days of innocence, he had given names to the *innocent* animals of the Creation. This sublime allegory is not to be found in "Paradise Lost."

FURTHER PARTICULARS CONCERNING MILTON.

THE bard of Eden said that a poet "ought to be himself a true poem;" that is, a model of the best and most honourable qualities.

Milton rose at four in the morning during summer, and at five in the winter. He wore almost invariably a dress of coarse grey cloth; studied till noon, dined frugally, walked with a guide, and, in the evening, sung, accompanying himself on some instrument. He understood harmony, and had a fine voice. He for a long time addicted himself to the practice of fencing. To judge by Paradise Lost, he must have been passionately fond of music and the perfume of flowers. He supped off five or six olives and a little water, retired to rest at nine, and composed at night, in bed. When he had made some verses, he rung and dictated to his wife or daughters. On sunny

days he sat on a bench at his door; he lived in Artillery Walk, leading to Bunhill Fields.

From without, insults were heaped on this the sick and forsaken lion. These lines were addressed to him, headed "Upon John Milton's not suffering for his Traitorous Book, when the Tryers were executed, 1660:"

> "Thou escap'dst that vengeance which o'ertook,
> Milton, thy regicides, and thy own book,
> Was clemency in Charles beyond compare,
> And yet thy doom doth prove more grievous far:
> Old, sickly, poor, stark-blind, thou writ'st for bread;
> So, for to live, thou'dst call Salmasius from the dead."

They reproached him with his age, his ugliness, his small stature, and applied to him this verse of Virgil:

> "Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum,"

observing that the word *ingens* was the only one which did *not* apply to his person. He had the simplicity to reply (Defensio Autoris) that he was poor because he had never enriched himself; that he was neither large nor small; that at no age had he been considered ugly; that in youth, with a sword by his side, he had never feared the bravest.

In fact, he had been very handsome, and was so even in his age. The portrait of Adam is his own. His hair was admirable, his eyes of extraordinary clearness; no defect could be perceived in them; it would have been impossible to guess that he was blind. If we were not aware what party rage can do, could we believe that it would make it a crime for a man to be blind. But let us thank this abominable hate; we owe to it some exquisite lines. Milton first replies that he lost his sight in the defence of Liberty, then adds these passages, full of sublimity and tenderness.

"In the night that surrounds me, the light of the divine presence shines the more brightly for me. God beholds me with greater tenderness and compassion, because I can see nought but Him. The divine law ought not only to shield me from injury, but to render me more sacred; not on account of the loss of sight, but because I am under the shadow of the divine wings, which seem to produce this darkness in me. To this I attribute the affectionate assiduities of my friends, their soothing attentions, their kind visits, and their respectful behaviour."

We see to what shifts he was reduced in writing by a passage in one of his Letters to Peter Heimbach.

"That virtue of mine which you call my poli-

tical virtue, and which I would rather you had called devotion to my country—patriotism, enchanting me with her captivating name, almost, if I may so say, expatriated me. In finishing my letter, let me beg of you this favour, that, if you find some parts incorrectly written, you will impute the fault to the boy who writes for me; he is utterly ignorant of Latin, and I am obliged wretchedly enough to spell every word I dictate."

The miseries of Milton were still more aggravated by domestic griefs. I have already said that he lost his first wife, Mary Powell; she died in child-birth, as, after a year's marriage, did his second, Catherine Woodcock, of Hackney. His third, Elizabeth Minshull, survived him, and had used him well. He appears not to have been beloved; his daughters, who play such poetical parts in his Life, deceived him, and secretly sold his books. He complains of this. Unfortunately, his character seems to have had the inflexibility of his genius. Johnson has said, with precision and truth, that Milton believed woman made only for obedience, and man for *rebellion*.

THE PUBLICATION OF PARADISE LOST.

MILTON approached his fifty-ninth year, when, in 1667, he thought of publishing "Paradise Lost." He had shewn the manuscript, then divided into ten books, to Ellwood, a quaker, who has left to English literature the "Sacred History," and "the Davideid." The manuscript of "Paradise Lost" was not in the hand-writing of the author. Milton had not the means of paying a copyist. Some of his friends took turns to write from his dictation. The censor refused his imprimatur to this second Galileo, this discoverer of new stars. He cavilled with every line; above all, high treason appeared springing from the magnificent passage, in which the obscuring of Satan's glory is compared to an eclipse, which

> —— with fear of change
> Perplexes monarchs.

But how could Dr. Tomkyns help perceiving allu-

sions to the manners of the restored dynasty, so pointed in the lines that form part of this fine invocation to conjugal love,—

——— Not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain

Milton still more clearly depicts the court of Charles (in that of Bacchus) whose courtiers he represents as ready to tear him piece-meal, as the Bacchantes did Orpheus, on the hills of Thrace.

But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard,
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the muse defend
Her son.

It is probable that the ingenious servility of the censor saved "Paradise Lost." Tomkyns dared not recognise the king and his friends in a portrait, the strong resemblance of which struck every eye.

The intimidated booksellers were not eager to possess the manuscript of a poor author, almost unknown as a poet, suspected and unpopular as a prose-writer. At last he found one bolder than

66562

the rest, who tremblingly ventured to publish this dangerous work. The contract of sale, and the manuscript, soiled by the printer, are preserved.

In Milton's agreement with Samuel Simmons, for the copy of "Paradise Lost," dated 27th April, 1667; it was agreed that John Milton, gentleman, should give up to Samuel Simmons, printer, as his property for ever, for the sum of five pounds sterling, to him, Milton, present payment, all the impressions, copies, and manuscripts of a poem, entitled "Paradise Lost," or by what other title or name the said poem might be called. A singular clause, by which it may be seen that Milton, even when his poem was completed and sold, still hesitated as to the title he would give it. Samuel Simmons engaged, in consideration of possessing "Paradise Lost," to pay a further sum of five pounds sterling, at the end of the first impression, when he should have sold 1,300 copies of the work. He moreover pledged himself to pay, to John Milton, or his heirs, at the end of a second edition, likewise after the sale of 1,300 copies, a third sum of five pounds sterling. Subjoined to this agreement are three receipts. One dated 26th April, 1669, signed John Milton, who acknowledges having received the first two sums mentioned; the other, signed Elizabeth Milton, widow, December

21st, 1680, who acknowledges having received eight pounds sterling, on giving up all claim on the edition of "Paradise Lost," in 12 books. Finally, there is a third receipt, or what may be called letters patent, by Elizabeth Milton, April 29th, 1681, in which she renounces for ever all claim against Samuel Simmons, all demands that could be made from the beginning of the world unto the day of these presents. "Done in the thirty-third year of the reign of our sovereign lord Charles, by the grace of God, king of England, Scotland, Ireland, and France, defender of the faith."

Thus, Milton received ten pounds sterling for yielding his rights to "Paradise Lost," and his widow eight *.

* This statement is erroneous. Milton's agreement with Simmons entitled the author to a conditional payment of fifteen pounds beyond the first five pounds. Of this sum five pounds were to be paid after the sale of 1,300 copies of the first edition, and five pounds in the same manner both on the second and third. Milton himself received the second payment of five pounds. The second edition appeared in the year of his death, and the third four years afterwards. The sums payable on these must have been paid to his widow, who in 1680—that is to say, two years after the publication of the third edition—sold all her claim on the work to Simmons for eight pounds; "so that," says Hayley, "twenty-eight pounds, at different times in the course of thirteen years, is the whole pecuniary reward which this great performance produced to the poet and his widow."—Translator.

The last receipts of his widow are dated in the thirty-third year of Charles the Second's reign; that is to say, the Revolution of 1649 never occurred; Cromwell never reigned; and Milton, Secretary to the Commonwealth and the Protector, did not write, during the Commonwealth and the Protectorate, the immortal poem sold for ten pounds, paid in the space of two years; and it was Milton's widow who could sign to all this! What matters it? It was no more in the power of Charles the Second to efface the times whose date Cromwell and Milton had established, than of Louis XVIII. to erase from his reign that of Napoleon.

SAMSON AGONISTES. PARADISE REGAINED.

NEW LOGIC. TRUE RELIGION. DEATH OF MILTON.

THROUGHOUT the life of the poet, "Paradise Lost" remained buried in the shop of the adventurous bookseller. In 1667, at the height of Louis XIV.'s glory, Andromache made its appearance on our stage. Was John Milton then known in France? Yes, perhaps, by some few lawyers as a rascally scribbler, whose diatribes had been duly burned by the executioners of Paris and Toulouse.

Milton survived the publication of his poem seven years, but did not witness its success. Johnson, who has denied him all he can deny, will not even leave him the bitter pleasure of believing himself mistaken, or thinking that he had wasted his life, that an indifferent or jealous age disdained his genius. The doctor pretends that "Paradise Lost" met with actual success during the life of its

author, "Fancy," he says, "can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton surveyed the silent progress of his work, and marked his reputation stealing its way in a kind of subterraneous current through fear and silence. I cannot but conceive him calm and confident, little disappointed, not at all dejected, relying on his own merit with steady consciousness, and waiting without impatience the vicissitudes of opinion and the impartiality of a future generation."

This supposition is contrary to important facts. We shall see by his "Samson," if Milton thought himself appreciated by his contemporaries.

Milton had that strength of mind which surmounts misfortune, and tears itself from all day-dreams. Having thrown all his genius on the world in his poem, he continued his labours, as if he had given nothing to mankind, as if "Paradise Lost" was a forgotten pamphlet, about which he need care no more. He published successively "Samson," "Paradise Regained," his "New Logic," and a "Treatise on True Religion."

"Paradise Regained" is tedious, though calm and beautiful; but the tragedy of "Samson" breathes all the energy and simplicity of the antique. The poet himself is depicted in the person of the Israelite, blind, a prisoner, and unfortunate. A noble way of revenging himself on his age. At

the feast of Dagon, Samson obtains leave to breathe awhile, at the door of his prison, in Gaza; there he laments his miseries.

I seek
This unfrequented place, to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind,
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone
But rush upon me, thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
* * * * *
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain,
Blind among enemies. O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age.
* * * * *
Inferior to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me.
They creep, yet see, I dark in light exposed.
Oh dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse,
Without all hope of day!
* * * * *
Since life so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul—
* * why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th' eye confined?
So obvious, and so easy to be quenched?
When had I not been thus exiled from light,
As in a land of darkness . . .
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of life,
Life in captivity,
Among inhuman foes.

It is believed that in the last lines he alludes to the execution of the second Sir Henry Vane.

Samson, brought to the feast of Gaza for the amusement of his guests, prays to God to restore his strength, and drags down the pillars of the banquet-hall, expiring amid the noble ruins beneath which he crushes the Philistines, as Milton, in death, buried his enemies in his glory.

Milton, in his last days, was forced to sell his library. He drew near his end. Dr. Wright, going to see him, found him confined to the first floor of his small house, in a very small room, to which the visiter ascended by a staircase, carpeted, extempore, with green baize*, to deaden the noise of footsteps, and to procure silence for the man who was advancing towards everlasting silence. The author of "Paradise Lost," attired in a black doublet, reclined in an elbow-chair. His head was uncovered, its silver locks fell on his shoulders, his blind but fine dark eyes sparkled amidst the paleness of his countenance.

On the 10th of November, 1674, that God who had discoursed with him by night came to fetch him; and reunited him in Eden with the angels,

* This is evidently a mistake of the author's. The English biographers of Milton relate, on the testimony of Antony Wood, that he was found sitting in a small chamber, *hung with rusty green*.—TRANSLATOR.

amid whom he had lived, and whom he knew by their names, their offices, and their beauty.

Milton expired so gently that no one perceived the moment when, at the age of sixty-six years (within one month), he rendered back to God one of the mightiest spirits that ever animated human clay. This temporal life, though neither long nor short, served as a foundation for life eternal. The great man had dragged on a sufficient number of days on earth to feel their weariness; but not sufficient to exhaust his genius, which remained entire, even to his latest breath. Bossuet, like Milton, was fifty-nine when he composed the master-piece of his eloquence; with what youthful fire does he speak of his grey hair! Thus the author of "Paradise Lost" complains of being frozen by age, while depicting the love of Adam and Eve. The Bishop of Meaux pronounced the funeral oration of the Queen of England in 1669, the same year that Milton gave his receipt for the second five pounds paid for his poem. These incomparable geniuses, who both, in opposite parties, drew portraits of Cromwell, had perhaps never heard each other's names. The eagles which are seen by all the world live apart and lonely on their mountains.

Milton died just half way between the two revolutions; fourteen years after the Restoration of Charles II: and fourteen years before the coming

of William III. He was buried beside his father, in the choir of St. Giles's church. Long afterwards, the curious went to see a little stone, the inscription on which was no longer visible; that stone covered the abandoned ashes of Milton; it is not known whether the name of the author of "Paradise Lost" had been marked on it; if so, it was effaced.

The poet's family was soon plunged into obscurity. Thirty years had elapsed after Milton's death, when Deborah, seeing, for the first time, a portrait of the poet, then become celebrated, exclaimed, "Oh, my father! my dear father!"

Deborah had married Abraham Clarke, a Spitalfields weaver. She died, aged seventy-two, in the month of August, 1727. One of his granddaughters married Thomas Foster, also a weaver. Reduced to penury, a critic proposed a subscription in her favour; he said,—"This proposal ought to be well received, as it is made by me, I may be regarded as the Zoilus of the English Homer." Zoilus, however, had not the gratification of supporting the grandchild of Homer, by means of the abuse which he had lavished on the father of biblical epic poetry. The English theatre became the guardian of the orphan. The "Mask of Comus" was performed for her benefit, and Johnson, though otherwise so severe on Milton, wrote the prologue to it.

Deborah was known to Professor Ward, and to Richardson, to whom we are indebted for a life of Milton. Addison also patronised and obtained fifty guineas for her, from Queen Caroline.

A son of Deborah's, Caleb Clarke, went to India, in the beginning of the eighteenth century. We learn from Sir James Mackintosh that this grandson of Milton's was parish clerk at Madras. Caleb had three children, by his wife Mary: Abraham, Mary (who died in 1706), and Isaac. Abraham, great-grandson of Milton, married in September, 1725, Anna Clarke, and had by her a daughter, Mary, whose birth was registered at Madras, April 2nd, 1727. There disappears all trace of Milton's family. We know not what became of Abraham and Isaac, who did not die at Madras, and whose deaths, to this day, have not been found on the Registers of Calcutta or Bombay. If they had returned to England they could not have escaped the admirers and biographers of Milton. They are lost in the vast regions of India, in the cradle of the world sung by their ancestor. Perhaps some unconscious drops of his free blood now animate the breast of a slave; perhaps they flow in the veins of a priest of Buddha, or in those of some Indian shepherd, who, retired under the shade of a fig tree,

> Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
> At loop-holes, cut through thickest shade.
>
> PARADISE LOST, B. IX.

Nothing is more natural than the curiosity which leads us to inquire after the families of illustrious men. That of Bonaparte has not perished, for he left behind him the kings and queens made by his sword. I have elsewhere endeavoured to trace what has become of Cromwell's descendants; his name is inseparably united in glory with that of Milton. "It is possible," I have said, in 'The Four Stuarts,' "that a lineal heir of Oliver Cromwell's by Henry, may now be an unknown Irish peasant, perhaps a catholic, living on potatoes, among the turf bogs of Ulster; attacking Orangemen by night, and combating the atrocious laws of the Protector. It is even possible that an unknown descendant of Cromwell's may have been a Franklin or a Washington in America."

ON THE IMPERFECTIONS OF PARADISE LOST.

THE Earl of Dorset, going to make some purchase in the shop of Milton's publisher, chanced to lay his hand on "Paradise Lost;" the bookseller humbly begged his lordship to read it, and procure him purchasers. The Earl took, perused, and lent it to Dryden, who returned it with these words:—"This man will cut us all out, and the ancients too."

Nevertheless, the fame of "Paradise Lost" spread but slowly; the frivolous and corrupt manners of the day, the aversion felt for the religious sects, whose violence had engendered incredulity, opposed the success of a poem so austere in its subject, style, and ideas. Neither the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Rochester, nor Sir William Temple, make any mention of Milton. But, in 1688, a folio edition of "Paradise Lost," under the patronage of Lord Somers, attracted some notice. One would almost say that the glory of the enemy

of the Stuarts, suppressed by them, awaited the year of their fall to blaze forth. If Milton had lived, like his brother, till the epoch of the Revolution, 1688, would he have found favour with the new government? I doubt it. They had but changed their king. The old regicide Ludlow, who hastened from Lausanne, found himself as much a stranger under William the Third, as he would have been under James the Second. The man of another time, he returned to die in his solitude.

By degrees, editions of "Paradise Lost" were multiplied. Addison devoted to it eighteen papers in "The Spectator." By this time people could not erect altars enough for their divinity. Among the objects of public worship, Milton took his place beside Shakspeare.

Some opposing voices would nevertheless be heard—no great reputation ever arose undisputed. It was asserted that Milton had imitated Mosenius, Ramsay, Vida, Sannazarius, Romæus, Fletcher, Staphorst, Taubman, Andreini, Quintianus, Malapert, Fox; they might have added to this list Saint-Avitus, Dubartas, and Tasso. Saint-Avitus has some very lovely scenes in Eden. It is probable that Milton, while at Naples, in company with Manso, had read the '*Sette giornale del mondo creato*,' by Tasso. The poet of Jeru-

salem makes Eve spring from the side of Adam, while God shed a peaceful sleep upon the weary limbs of our first sire.

Tasso softens the scriptural image, and, in his fair creations, woman is only the first dream of man.

What has all this to do with the glory of Milton? Did these pretended originals open their work with Satan's awakening in Hell? had they traversed Chaos, with the rebel angel? discerned the creation from the threshold of the empyreum? apostrophised the sun? contemplated the bliss of man in his primitive innocence, or guessed the dignified love of Eve and Adam? Whether it be that by translating Milton the habit of intimate association has accustomed me to his faults, whether it be that, enfranchising criticism, I judge the poet by the ideas which he must have had, I am no longer displeased with things that formerly shocked me. The meeting with artillery in heaven now seems to me to spring from a very natural idea. Milton made Satan invent whatever is most mischievous among men. He often reverted to these inventions, on occasion of the gunpowder plot. He has five Latin pieces "*in proditionem bombardicam; in inventorem bombardæ.*" The sneers of the demons imitate those of Homer's heroes. I am pleased to see the Iliad shine through Paradise Lost.

The demons, changed into serpents, who hiss at their chief, when he has just boasted of having in the shape of a serpent ruined the human race, are caprices, but expressed with the astonishing felicity of a superabundant fancy. In the criticisms on this passage, authors either did not or would not see the explanation which the poet himself gives of that metamorphosis; it is quite conformable with the subject of the work and the most popular traditions of Christianity. It is the last appearance of Satan. The Prince of Darkness, a superb intelligence, at the commencement of the poem, before the fall of man, becomes, in the end, after that fall, a hideous reptile; instead of the archangel ruined, yet still shining like a sun eclipsed, you now see him only in the form of the *Old Serpent, the Dragon of the Pit.*

It were less unjust to tax Milton with some instances of bad taste. "No fear lest dinner cool," for example.

I would also have suppressed the lines in which Adam tells Eve that she was

> * but a rib,
> Crooked by nature * * *
> * * * from me drawn,
> Well, if thrown out as supernumerary.

Unfortunately, too, this blot has fallen on a dramatic passage of the most finished beauty.

The poet, also, makes rather an ill use of his erudition; but, after all, it is better to have too much learning than too little. Milton drew more beauties from his knowledge than Shakspeare did from his ignorance. Is it not astonishing that, amid the false natural philosophy of his time, he announced *attraction*, afterwards demonstrated by Newton? Kepler, Boullian, and Hook, it is true, had opened the road to that discovery, and Milton might have been aware of what they termed *tractory power*. In antiquity, Aristarchus made the sun the centre of the universe.

Both lights and shades are sometimes wanting in the poet's pictures; one might guess that their painter could not see, as one recognises the musical performance of a blind man by the indefiniteness of certain notes. The descriptions in "Paradise Lost" have about them something gentle, soft, misty, ideal, like the dreams of memory. The setting suns of Milton accord with his own time of life, his darkened lids, and his approach to the tomb; they have a tone of melancholy nowhere else to be fouud. You need ask him but to depict a night in Eden—he says,

> the wakeful nightingale,
> She all night long her amorous descant sang;
> Silence was pleased.

Five or six lines, soaring above all commonplaces, are sufficient for him to present a religious spectacle of morning:—

> Now, when as sacred light began to dawn,
> In Eden, on the humid flowers, that breath'd
> Their morning incense, when all things that breathe
> From th' Earth's great altar send up silent praise
> To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
> With grateful smell.

You might fancy that you were reading one of the Psalms. "Praise God all the earth. Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

In short, if the poet sometimes betrays fatigue, if the lyre drops from his wearied hand, he rests, and I rest along with him. I should like the fine passages of the Cid and the Horatii connected by harmonious and laboured elegance. The simple parts of Corneille are but paths to the magnificent ones, that nevertheless delight me.

THE PLAN OF PARADISE LOST.

WHAT can I say of "Paradise Lost" that has not been said already? A thousand times have its sublime traits been cited; its conversations, its combats, the fall of its angels, and that Hell which

> ——— would have fled
> Affrighted, but strict Fate had cast too deep
> Her dark foundations.

I shall chiefly dwell, therefore, upon the general composition of the work, to point out the art with which the whole is conducted.

Satan awakes in the midst of the fiery lake, (and what a waking!) He calls together the council of the punished legions, reminds his companions of their failure and disobedience, of an ancient oracle which foretold the birth of a new world, the creation of a new race, formed with a design to fill the places of the fallen angels. Dreadful idea! It is in hell that the name of man is first pronounced.

Satan proposes to seek this unknown world, to destroy or to corrupt it. He departs, explores hell, encounters Sin and Death; he induces Sin to open the portals of the abyss, traverses Chaos, discovers the creation, descends from the sun, and arrives on earth; sees our first parents in Eden; is moved by their beauty, their innocence, and, by his remorseful tenderness, gives an ineffable idea of their nature and their happiness. God beholds Satan from heaven, and predicts the weakness of man, his utter ruin, unless some one presents himself to be his surety, and die for him. The heavenly choir stand mute with amazement. In the silence of heaven, the Son alone replies, and offers himself as a sacrifice. The victim is accepted, and man redeemed, even before he falls.

The Almighty sends Raphael to warn our first parents of their enemy's arrival and intent. The celestial messenger relates to Adam the revolt of the angels, which took place at the moment when the Father, from the summit of the holy hill, proclaims that he has begotten the Son, and endowed him with full power. The pride and jealousy of Satan, inflamed by this declaration, excite him to the combat; vanquished with his legions, he is thrown into hell. Milton had no data for assigning a motive for Satan's rebellion; he was obliged to draw every thing from his own genius. Thus, with the art of a great master, he makes

known what had befallen before the opening of the poem. Raphael then relates to Adam the work of the Six Days. Adam, in his turn, describes his own creation. The angel returns to heaven. Eve suffers herself to be tempted, tastes the forbidden fruit, and involves Adam in her fall.

In the tenth book all the personages re-appear: they are about to meet their fate. In the eleventh and twelfth books, Adam sees the results of his faults, in all that is to happen till the Incarnation of Christ. The Son must sacrifice himself to ransom man. The Son is one of the characters of the poem. By means of a vision, he remains the last and alone on the stage, in order to fulfil, in the soliloquy of the Cross, the definitive action. *Consummatum est.*

Such is the work in its simplicity; the incidents and the narrations spring the one from the other. We travel through hell, chaos, heaven, earth, eternity, and time, amid blasphemies and hymns, tortures and delights; we rove through these immensities with ease, unconsciously, insensible of moving; we think not of the efforts it must have cost to bear us thus high, on eagle's wings, or to create such a universe.

The observation touching the last appearance of the Son, shows, contrary to the opinion of certain critics, that Milton would have been wrong in

suppressing the last two books. These books, considered, I know not why, as the weakest part of the poem, are, in my opinion, quite as beautiful as the others; nay, they have a human interest which the earlier ones possess not. From the greatest of poets, as he was, the author becomes the greatest of historians, without ceasing to be a poet. Michael informs our first parents that they must quit Paradise. Eve weeps; grieved at leaving her garden, she says,

Oh, flowers!

* * * * *

My early visitation, and my last
At even, which I bred up with tender hand,
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names.

A charming trait of character, which has been supposed to be the idea of a modern German poet, but is only one of the beauties with which the works of Milton abound. Adam, too, complains, but it is that he must abandon the scenes where God had deigned to honour him with his presence. He says,

Here I would frequent

* * * * *

* * * and to my sons relate
On this mount He appeared, under this tree
Stood visible, among these pines his voice
I heard, here with him at this fountain talked.

This idea of God, with which man is impressed throughout the "Paradise Lost," is one of extraordinary sublimity. Eve, in waking to life, is occupied but with her own beauty, and sees God in Man. Adam, as soon as he is created, guessing that he could not have made himself, instantly seeks and calls upon his Maker.

Eve remains sleeping at the foot of the hill. Michael, from its summit, shows Adam, in a vision, his whole race. Thus the Bible is unfolded. First comes the story of Cain and Abel. When Adam sees Abel fall, he exclaims to the Angel,

—— Oh Teacher!

* * * * *

But have I now seen death? is this the way
I must return to native dust?

Observe that, in the Scriptures, nothing is said of Adam after his fall; silence spreads over the nine hundred and thirty years between his sin and his death. It would seem that the human race, his hapless posterity, durst not speak of him. Even Saint Paul names him not among the Patriarchs who lived by faith. The Apostle commences his list with Abel. Adam passes for the chief of the dead, because in him all mankind died; and yet for nine centuries he saw his sons travelling towards the grave, of which he was the inventor, and which he had opened for them.

After the murder of Abel, the Angel shows Adam a "lazar house," and every different form of death; this picture is full of power, in the style of Tintoretto. The poet says,

> — Adam could not but weep,
> Tho' not of woman born.

A pathetic reflection, inspired by that passage in Job,

> "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble."

The history of the Giants of the mountain, who seduce the females of the plain, is marvellously told. The Deluge offers another vast scene. In this eleventh book, Milton imitates Dante in the form of speech—"Master," used in the dialogue. Dante would have invited Milton as a brother to enter with him the group of great poets.

The twelfth book is no longer a vision, but a narrative. The Tower of Babel, the call of Abraham, the advent of Christ, his incarnation, his resurrection, are replete with beauties of every kind. This book concludes with the banishment of Adam and Eve, and with lines so sad, that every body knows them by heart.

In these last two books, the poet's melancholy is increased; he seems more than ever to feel the

weight of misfortune and age. He attributes to Michael these words:—

> So mayst thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
> Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
> Gathered, not harshly pluck'd, for death mature:
> This is old age; but then thou must outlive
> Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
> To withered, weak, and grey; thy senses, then,
> Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego
> To what thou hast; and for the air of youth,
> Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
> A melancholy damp of cold and dry
> To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
> The balm of life.

A commentator, speaking of Milton's genius, in these two last books of "Paradise Lost," says, "It is the same ocean, but at the ebb of tide; the same sun, but at the moment of its setting."

Be it so. The sea appears most lovely to my eye when it permits me to wander over its deserted strand, while it retreats towards the horizon with the setting sun.

CHARACTERS OF THE PERSONS IN PARADISE LOST.

ADAM AND EVE.

Milton has given, in the first Man and Woman, the original type of their sons and daughters upon earth.

—— In their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure;
(Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd,)
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he and valour form'd;
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him:
His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
She as a veil down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,

As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
* * * * *
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or angel, for they thought no ill;
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

Adam, simple and sublime, instructed by Heaven, and drawing his experience from God, has but one weakness, and it is evident that this weakness will be his ruin. After having recounted his own creation to Raphael, and his conversations with God on solitude, he describes his transports at the first sight of his fair companion:

—— Methought I saw,——
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
Who, stooping, opened my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh filled up and heal'd:
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew
Man-like, but different sex, so lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
And in her looks, which from that time infused

Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspired
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappear'd, and left me dark; I wak'd
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
With what all earth or heaven could bestow
To make her amiable: on she came,
Led by her heavenly Maker, tho' unseen,
And guided by his voice, not uninform'd
Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites.
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In ev'ry gesture dignity and love.
I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud:
'This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair, but fairest this
Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself
Before me; Woman is her name, of Man
Extracted; for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.'
She heard me thus; and, though divinely brought,
Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
* * * * *
* * * to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turned;
I followed her; she what was honour'd knew,
And with obsequious majesty approv'd
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn: all heaven,

And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selected influence; the earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp.
Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss
Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As us'd, or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire;——
—— but here,
Far otherwise, transported I behold,
Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
Superior and unmoved, here only weak
Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.
Or nature fail'd in me, or left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament———
——— When I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded. Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses, discountenanc'd, and like Folly shows;
Authority and Reason on her wait,
As one intended first not after made

Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind, and nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic plac'd.

Who ever wrote like this? What poet ever spoke such language? How miserable seem all modern compositions beside these strong and magnificent conceptions! Milton takes care to keep Eve aloof, while Adam betrays his weakness to Raphael; but the inquisitive woman, concealed among the foliage, hears enough for her own ruin.

There is an inexpressible charm about Eve; she unites innocence with loveliness, but she is capricious, presuming, vain of her beauty; she insists on going alone to her morning tasks, in spite of the entreaties of Adam; she is offended with the fears he betrays, and believes herself capable of resisting the Prince of Darkness. Her weak husband yields; he sadly follows her with his eyes as she disappears among the trees. Eve has no sooner arrived at the Tree of Knowledge than she is beguiled, in spite of the warnings of Adam and of Heaven, in spite of the images presented to her in a dream, which had nevertheless alarmed her, and in which the Father of Lies had said to her what the serpent repeats. The praise of her beauty intoxicates her; she falls.

The stupor of Adam, his resolution to partake of the forbidden fruit, that he may die with Eve,

the despair of both, their reproaches, his forgiveness, the reconciliation; Eve's proposal either to destroy herself or to deny herself posterity—all is in the highest strain of pathos. Eve, moreover, reminds one of Shakspeare's females; she has an air so extremely youthful; her simplicity is almost child-like; it furnishes an excuse for a seduction which is effected with such facility.

The style of these scenes could have belonged to no one but Milton. The delicious lines in which Eve gives an account of her first waking after her creation, are well known. In the same book, the fourth, she also says to our first Father:

> Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
> With charms of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
> When first on this delightful land he spreads
> His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
> Glist'ning with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
> After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
> Of grateful evening mild; then silent night
> With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
> And these, the gems of heaven, her starry train.
> But neither breath of morn when she ascends
> With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
> On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower,
> Glist'ning with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
> Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent night,
> With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
> Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.

Before they enter the nuptial bower, Adam pauses, and veils his expected felicity in this chaste and pious aspiration:

This delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promised from us two a race
To fill this earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake
And when we seek as now thy gift of sleep.

Adam wakes before Eve in the morning,

He, on his side
Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love,
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus or Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching whisper'd thus: 'Awake
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime.

When Raphael beholds Eve, he addresses her with this angelic salutation:

Hail, mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
Have heap'd this table.

Thus every thing is sanctified by religious sentiment in the hymns of this poet. These gracious pictures of blessedness are the more dramatic because they are witnessed by Satan. He learns from the very lips of the happy pair their own secret and his power to ruin them. The felicity of Adam and Eve alarms us for them; every instant of their bliss makes us tremble, since it

must be followed by the perdition of the human race. The Prince of Hell exclaims:

> Oh gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
> Your change approaches, when all these delights
> Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe;
> More woe the more your taste is now of joy;
> Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd
> Long to continue,
> ——— yet no purpos'd foe
> To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
> Though I unpitied. ———

If the art of the poet is any where displayed, it is in the description of our first parents' love after the fall. The poet employs his former colours, but their effect is no longer the same. Eve is not now the wife, but the mistress. The virgin bride of Eden's bower has entered that of Paphos; voluptuousness has superseded love, and blandishments chaste caresses. And how has the poet effected this metamorphosis? He has banished from his description but a single word—innocence. The pair come forth sated, drowsy from the inebriation of the forbidden fruit; we see that they have begotten Cain. They discover with shame the pale traces of pleasure in their countenances; they perceive that they are naked, and resort to the fig tree. Man has fallen. The globe is deranged upon its axis, the seasons changed, and Death first sets foot on the earth.

THE FATHER AND THE SON.

THE character of the Almighty Father is obscurely traced. In this we must admire the author's reserve. He feared to put mortal words into the lips of an imperishable being; therefore gives Jehovah none that are not sanctioned by Holy Writ, and by the commentaries of the first-rate minds in Christendom in succeeding ages: every thing turns on the most abstract questions of Grace, Free Will, Eternal Prescience. The Almighty increases in majesty amidst the theological philosophy, in which the hand of respect and mystery keeps him concealed. We shall see that Milton, in the confusion of his systems, formed no very distinct idea of the one God.

But the character of the Son is a work the perfections of which have not been sufficiently remarked. In Christ is the nature of man; man

may therefore the better comprehend Christ, and, as in Christ there is also the divine nature, it is through man that Milton raised himself to the real knowledge of this union of God and man. The tenderness of the Son is ineffable, and never-failing. In the third book he offers himself as an expiatory victim; even before man has fallen he says to the Father:—

> Behold me then; me for him, life for life,
> I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
> Account me man; I for his sake will leave
> Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
> Freely put off, and for him lastly die
> Well pleas'd; on me let death wreak all his rage.
> His words here ended, but his meek aspect
> Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
> To mortal man.

In the tenth book the Father sends the Son to judge the guilty pair; he replies—

> I go to judge
> On earth these thy transgressors; but thou knowst,
> Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,
> When time shall be, for so I undertook
> Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain
> Of right, that I may mitigate their doom,
> On me derived.

The Son refuses all ' attendance,' all ' train,' where none

Are to behold the judgment but the judg'd,
Those two.

He descends to the garden, "from wrath more cool" than its evening breeze. His voice, far from being terrible, is "by soft winds brought to their ears." They hide themselves; he calls, "Where art thou Adam?" The man hesitates, but comes, "and with him Eve, more loth," and,

Adam faltering long, thus answer'd brief:
I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom
The gracious Judge, without revile, repli'd,
My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoiced: how is it now become
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
Hath told thee?

* * * * *

So judged he man, both Judge and Saviour sent.
——— Then pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume.
As when he wash'd his servants' feet, so now,
As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts.

* * * * *

Nor he their outward only ———
——— but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness
Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up returned.

At the conclusion of the same book, the tenth, Eve and Adam, reconciled and penitent, offer their prayers to God, from the place where he hath placed them. Their orisons ascend to heaven; the Great Intercessor presents them to the Father,

clad
With incense where the golden altar fum'd.
* * * *
See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
And pray'rs, which ———
——— I thy priest before thee bring.
* * * *
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him, me his advocate
And propitiation, all his works on me,
Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those
Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.

The beauty of the poetry here equals that of the sentiment. In the twelfth book, Milton, quitting the loftiness of the Bible, descends to the gentle meekness of the Gospel, to depict the mystery of redemption. Michael says to Adam.

Thy punishment
He shall endure, by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death;
* * * *
For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,
Seiz'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd,
A shameful and accurs'd, nail'd to the cross,

By his own nation, slain for bringing life,
But to the cross he nails thy enemies.

Milton's genius is softened by the rays of Christianity. As he displayed events preceding Time, he leaves you in that time into which he has introduced you at the fall of man. His own mind passes over this intermediate world, which it disdains, and hastens to announce the destruction of that Time to whom he gives the wings of hours, to proclaim the renewal of all things, the union of the end and of the beginning, in the bosom of God.

MILTON'S ANGELS.

AMONG the angels there are great varieties of character. Uriel, Raphael, Michael, have each peculiar traits which distinguish them from one another. Raphael is the friend of man. The portrait which the poet draws of him is replete with modesty and grace.

Sent by God to our first parents, on arriving in Eden, he

> Shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled
> The circuit wide.

Adam thus calls his partner:

> Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold,
> Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
> Comes this way moving; seems another morn
> Ris'n on mid-noon.

Raphael accosts Adam, as, in Scriptural history, the angels demanded hospitality of the Patriarchs, or, in Pagan annals, gods sat at the table of Baucis and Philemon. Raphael salutes our first mother—

> On whom the angel *Hail*
> Bestow'd, the holy salutation used
> Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.

He then relates, as I have said, what has passed in heaven, the fall of the rebel angels and the creation of the world; he satisfies the curiosity of the father of men; and blushes

> Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,

when Adam ventures to question him on the loves of spirits. When he returns to heaven, Adam says:

> Go, heavenly guest, ———
> ——— thou to mankind
> Be good and friendly still, and oft return!

Michael, chief of the heavenly warriors, is sent in his turn, but to banish the guilty pair from Paradise.

> Not in his shape celestial, but as man
> Clad to meet man: over his lucid arms
> While military vest of purple flow'd;
> His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime
> In manhood, where youth ended; by his side,
> As in a glist'ring zodiac, hung the sword,
> Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.

Adam, perceiving him from afar, says to Eve:

> ——— Majesty
> Invests his coming; yet not terrible
> That I should fear, not sociably mild
> As Raphael.

The poet is familiar with all these angels, and makes you live with them. The faithful one in the Satanic host is energetic. I shall presently quote his discourse. Even the cherubim who in

their night-watch surprise Satan at the ear of Eve are correctly drawn. Satan insultingly cries:

> Know ye not me? ye knew me once, no mate
> For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar;
> Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
> The lowest of your throng.
> To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn:
> Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same
> Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
> As when thou stoodst in heaven upright and pure.
> Thy glory then, when thou no more wast good,
> Departed from thee.
> Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
> Will save us trial what the least can do
> Single against the wicked, and thence weak.

When Satan transforms himself into a spirit of light, the poet spreads over him all the harmonies of his art.

> Under a coronet his flowing hair
> In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
> Of many-colour'd plumes, sprinkled with gold;
> His habit, fit for speed, succinct, and held
> Before his decent steps a silver wand.

All these spirits, in their infinite variety and beauty, appear before us as if painted by Michael Angelo or Raphael; or rather we see that Milton habited and represented them after the pictures of those great masters. He has transferred them from the canvass to poetry, and, by the aid of his lyre, given language to the lips which painting had left mute.

MILTON'S DEMONS AND ALLEGORICAL PERSONAGES.

It were useless to repeat what every one knows respecting the spirits of darkness, as Milton has produced them. Satan is acknowledged to be an incomparable creation.

Louis Racine makes this remark in speaking of Satan's four soliloquies: "On what occasions does the spirit of rage, the king of evil, utter reflections which may be called wise? First, when contemplating the beauty of the sun; secondly, in contemplating the beauty of the earth; thirdly, in contemplating the beauty of two beings, who in peaceful converse assure each other of their mutual love; fourthly, in contemplating one of these creatures alone, among trees, cultivating flowers, the image of innocence and tranquillity. All that is good and fair at first excites his admiration; this awakens remorse, by the remembrance of what he has lost, and the results of his remorse only harden him the more in crime. The

king of evil by degrees becomes worthy of his new empire. Eve gathering flowers appears to him happy; her serenity is the pleasure of innocence; he hastens to destroy what he admires, because he is the destroyer of all happiness. In these four soliloquies Milton has preserved the same character for Satan, without copying himself. Satan is not the hero of his poem, but the master-piece of his poetry."

Milton has almost given to Satan sensations of love for Eve. The fallen angel is jealous, at viewing the caresses of the wedded pair. Eve fascinating for a moment the rival of the Almighty, the chief of hell, the king of hate, leaves in the imagination an incomprehensible impression of the beauty of the woman.

The allegorical personages of "Paradise Lost," are Chaos, Death, and Sin. Such is the fire of the poet that he has made the two latter real and formidable persons. Nothing is more wondrous than the instinct of Sin, when, from the threshold of hell, between the flames of Tartarus and the ocean of Chaos, this phantom guesses that her father and her son have conquered the world. Death too, says to his mother Sin:

——— Such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of death from all things that there live.
* * * * *

So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd
His nostrils wide into the murky air,
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.

Sin, as I observed in the "*Genie de Christianisme*," is of the feminine gender in English, and Death masculine. Racine wishing to save his language from this confusion of sexes, gave Sin the Greek name of Até, and Death that of Ades. I have not enslaved myself to his scruples. Against Louis Racine I have the authority of Jean Racine.

Le Mort est le seul dieu que j'osais implorer.

Death is the only God I dared implore.

It appears to me that readers accustomed beforehand to this picture will easily reconcile themselves to this change of genders, making Death masculine, and Sin feminine, in spite of our articles.

Voltaire, while in London, was one day criticising this celebrated allegory; Young, who heard him, made this distich impromptu:

You are so witty, profligate, and thin,
At once we think you *Milton's Death and Sin!*

It now but remains for me to speak of one other character in Paradise Lost, I mean that of Milton himself.

MILTON IN "PARADISE LOST."

THE republican is conspicuous in every verse of "*Paradise Lost*:" the speeches of Satan breathe a hatred of subjection. Milton, however, who, although an enthusiast of liberty, had nevertheless served Cromwell, reveals the kind of republic which accorded with his ideas: it is not a republic of equality, a plebeian republic; he desired an aristocratic republic, in which gradations of rank are admitted. Satan says:—

——— "if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then, or right, assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power or splendour less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to the abuse
Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordained to govern, not to serve."

Paradise Lost, Book V.

If there could remain any doubt on this subject, Milton, in his tract entitled "The Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth," speaks a language calculated to dispel all uncertainty; he therein avows that the republic should be governed *by a grand or general perpetual council;* he rejects the *popular remedy* adopted to check the ambition of this permanent council, as the people would plunge headlong into a *licentious and unbridled democracy.* Milton, the proud republican, had a coat of arms: he bore on a field sable, an eagle argent, double-headed gules, beak and legs sable. An eagle was, for the poet at least, a speaking escutcheon. The Americans have escutcheons of a more feudal character than those of the knights of the fourteenth century; such fancies are altogether harmless.

The speeches which constitute the greater part of "Paradise Lost," have acquired new interest since we have had a representative government. The poet has introduced into his work the political forms of the government of his native land. Satan convokes in hell a real parliament; he divides it into two chambers; Tartarus rejoices in a chamber of peers. Eloquence is one of the essential qualities of the author's talent; the speeches delivered by his personages are frequently models of

skill and energy. Abdiel, when parting from the rebel angels, addresses Satan in these words :—

"O alienate from God, O spirit accurs'd,
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
Determined, and thy hapless crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsaf'd; other decrees
Against thee are gone forth without recall;
That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;
Yet not for thy advice and threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know."

There is, in the poem, something which at first sight appears unaccountable: the infernal republic attempts to overthrow the celestial monarchy; Milton, though his sentiments are wholly republican, invariably ascribes justice and victory to the Almighty! The reason of this is that the poet was swayed by his religious opinions. In accordance with the Independents, he desired a theocratic republic, a hierarchical liberty, subject only to the

dominion of Heaven; he had represented Cromwell as the lieutenant-general of God and the protector of the republic:—

> Cromwell, our chief of men, who, through a cloud
> Not of war only, but detractions rude,
> Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
> To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
> And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
> Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his works pursued,
> While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
> And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
> And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
> To conquer still; peace hath her victories
> No less renown'd than war: new foes arise
> Threat'ning to bind our souls with secular chains:
> Help us to save free conscience from the paw
> Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

Satan and his angels were pictured to Milton's imagination by the proud Presbyterians, who refused to submit to the *Saints*, Milton's own faction, of which he hailed the inspired Cromwell as the godly leader.

We discern in Milton a man of troubled spirit; still under the influence of revolutionary scenes and passions, he stood erect after the downfall of the revolution which had fled to him for shelter, and palpitated in his bosom. But the earnestness of that revolution overpowers him; religious gravity forms the counterpoise to his political agitations. Stunned, however, at the overthrow of

his fondest illusions, at the dissipation of his dreams of liberty, he knows not which way to turn, but remains in a state of perplexity, even respecting religious truth.

An attentive perusal of "Paradise Lost" fixes on the mind the impression that Milton fluctuated between a variety of systems. In the very opening of his poem, he avows himself a Socinian by the celebrated expression "one greater man;" he is silent respecting the Holy Ghost, never names the Trinity, nowhere states the Son to be equal to the Father. The Son is not begotten of all eternity; the poet even places his creation after that of the angels. Milton is, if anything, an Arian; he does not admit what is properly called the *creation*, but supposes a pre-existing matter, co-eternal with the spirit. The particular creation of the universe is no more, in his opinion, than the arrangement of a little corner of chaos, which is ever threatening to return to its previous state of confusion. All the known philosophical theories of the poet have more or less taken root amongst his beliefs; at one time, Plato with the exemplars of ideas, or Pythagoras with the harmony of the spheres; at another, Epicurus, or Lucretius, with his materialism, as when he exhibits to view the half-formed animals issuing from the earth. He

is a fatalist when making the rebel angel say of himself and his companions:—

> "We know no time when we were not as now;
> Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd
> By our own quick'ning power, when fatal course
> Had circled his full orb.'

Milton is, moreover, a pantheist or Spinozist, but his pantheism is of an extraordinary kind.

The poet first appears to admit of the known pantheism, a medley of matter and mind; but, if man had not sinned, Adam would have gradually extricated himself from matter, and acquired the nature of angels. Adam falls into sin. With a view to redeem the spiritual part of man, the Son of God, who is all spirit, assumes a material substance, descends upon earth, dies, and re-ascends into heaven, after passing through matter. Christ thus becomes the vehicle by means of which matter, brought into contact with intelligence, becomes spiritualised. At length, the due time having elapsed, matter or the material world is at an end, and merges into the other principle. "The Son," says Milton, "shall be absorbed in the bosom of the Father, with the rest of the creatures*; God shall be all in all." This is a spiritual pantheism, succeeding the pantheism of the two principles.

* This I cannot find in Milton. TRANSLATOR.

Thus our soul will be absorbed in the source of spirituality. What is that sea of intelligence, a single drop of which, contained within matter, is sufficiently powerful to comprehend the motion of the spheres and to investigate the nature of God? What is the Infinite? What! still worlds after worlds! Imagination is bewildered in its endeavours to penetrate those abysses, and Milton is wrecked in the attempt. Nevertheless, amidst this chaos of principles, the poet remains biblical and a Christian; he rehearses the fall and the redemption. A Puritan at first, then an Independent and an Anabaptist, he becomes a *saint*, a quietist, and an enthusiast; it is at length but a voice that sings the praises of the Almighty. Milton had forsaken the house of God; he no longer gave any external signs of religion; in "Paradise Lost" he declares that prayer is the only worship acceptable to God.

This poem, which opens in hell, and, passing over the earth terminates in heaven, exhibits only two human beings in the vast wilderness of the new creation; the rest are the supernatural inhabitants of the abyss of endless felicity, or of the gulf of everlasting misery. Well, then, the poet has dared to penetrate this solitude, where he presents himself as the child of Adam, a deputy of the human race, fallen through disobedience.

He there appears as the hierophant, the prophet, commissioned to learn the history of man's fall, and to sing it on the harp devoted to the penances of David. He is so full of genius, holiness, and grandeur, that his noble head is not misplaced near that of our first parent, in the presence of God and of his angels. Issuing forth from the abyss of darkness, he hails that holy light which is denied to his eyes.

Hail, holy light, offspring of heaven first-born,
Or of the Eternal co-eternal beam,
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt there in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate!
Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
Before the heavens, thou wert, and, at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters, dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escap'd the Stygian pool * * *
And feel thy sovran, vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the muses haunt
Clear spring or shady grove * * *
* * * nor sometimes forget
Those other two equall'd with me in fate.
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris, and blind Mæonides,

And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old;
There feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But clouds instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of Nature's works, to me expung'd and ras'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse; that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

Elsewhere he exclaims in not less pathetic strains:

"If answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
* * * * * higher argument
Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depress'd."

How lofty must have been the intelligence of Milton, which could sustain this intercourse face to face with God, and the wonderful beings he has

created! No man ever displayed a more sober and at the same time a more delicate genius. "It was," says Hume, "during a state of poverty, blindness, disgrace, danger, and old age, that Milton composed his wonderful poem, which not only surpassed all the performances of his cotemporaries, but all the compositions which had flowed from his pen during the vigour of his age and the height of his prosperity." We actually distinguish in this poem, through the ardour of youthful years, the maturity of age and the gravity of misfortune; this imparts to "Paradise Lost" an extraordinary fascination of old age and youth, of restlessness and peace, of sadness and joy, of reason and love.

PART THE FOURTH.

LITERATURE UNDER THE LAST TWO STUARTS.

COMPARISON

BETWEEN THE MEN AND EVENTS OF THE ENGLISH AND OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONS.

WERE we, on quitting Milton, to hasten, without any transition, to the writers who flourished under the last two Stuarts, we should fall from a greater height than the angels of "Paradise Lost," who were hurled from heaven to an immeasurable depth. We have, however, to take a retrospect of the revolution from which the poet had emerged, and to compare it with our own revolution: by bestowing some further consideration on the age of Milton, we shall insensibly descend to the reigns of Charles and of James. We feel riveted, as it were, to those days of 1649, remarkable for their affinity with our own time; we shall see, by the comparison of men and events, that our revolutionary days maintain over those of the English republic and Protectorship a signal, though too often a fatal, superiority.

The French revolution was surpassed in litera-

ture by the English revolution; from the republic, the empire, the restoration, nothing has emanated which can bear comparison with the author of "Paradise Lost;" in other respects, in all but a moral and religious point of view, our revolution has far outstripped that of our neighbours.

When the Revolution of 1649 was brought about, the intercourse between nations had not reached the point which it has attained at the present day; the ideas, the events, of every country, were not conveyed over the whole world by the multiplicity of roads, the rapidity of couriers, the extension of commerce and industry, the publications of the periodical press. The revolution of Great Britain did not set Europe in a blaze; confined within an island, it did not carry its arms and its principles to the extremities of Europe; it did not preach liberty and the rights of man, as Mahomet preached the Koran and despotism, sword in hand; it was neither called upon to repel a foreign invasion, nor to defend itself against a system of terror; the religious and social state was not what it is at the present day.

In fact, the actors in that revolution never came up to the mark of those of the French revolution, measured as the latter was upon a much larger scale, and carried on by a nation much more closely connected with the general destinies of the

world. Is it to Ludlow or Hampden that we can compare Mirabeau? His superiors in a moral point of view, they were greatly inferior to him in genius *.

Connected by the excesses and accidents of his life with the most remarkable events, and with the existence of felons, ravishers, and adventurers, Mirabeau, the tribune of aristocracy, the deputy of democracy, partook of the characters of Gracchus and Don Juan, of Catiline and Guzman d'Alfarache, of Cardinal de Richelieu and Cardinal de Retz, of the profligate of the regency and the savage of the revolution; there moreover flowed in his veins the blood of the Mirabeaus; an exiled Florentine family, which retained somewhat of those armed palaces and those great factions illustrated by Dante; a French naturalised family, in which the republican spirit of Italy during the middle age, and the feudal spirit of our own middle age, were found combined in a succession of extraordinary men.

The ugliness of Mirabeau, laid upon a ground of beauty, for which his race was distinguished, produced an image of one of the powerful figures in the *Last Judgment* of Michael Angelo, the

* What follows, as far as, and including the parallel between Bonaparte and Cromwell, is a condensed extract from my Memoirs.

compatriot of Arrighetti. The marks left by the small-pox on the orator's face rather bore the appearance of scars occasioned by fire. Nature seemed to have moulded his head for empire or the gibbet, to have shaped his arms for the purpose of curbing a nation or carrying off a woman. When he shook his mane, with his eyes fixed upon the mob, he suddenly checked their progress; when he raised his foot and showed his claws, they ran furiously. Amidst the most frightful riot of a sitting, I have seen him in the tribune, dark, hideous, and motionless: he reminded me of the Chaos of Milton, impassible and shapeless—the centre of his own confusion.

Twice did I meet Mirabeau at an entertainment: on one occasion at the house of Voltaire's niece, the Marchioness de Villette; on another, at the Palais Royal, with deputies of the opposition, with whom Chapelain had made me acquainted. Chapelain was conveyed to the scaffold on the same tumbrel with M. de Malesherbes and my own brother.

Our discussion after dinner turned upon the subject of Mirabeau's enemies; I happened to be next to him; and, with the timidity of a young man, unknown to all, had not uttered a word. He looked me full in the face with his eyes of wickedness and genius, and, laying his broad hand

upon my shoulder, said, "They will never forgive me my superiority." Methinks I still feel the impression of that hand, as if Satan had touched me with his fiery claw*.

Too soon for his own sake, too late for that of the court, Mirabeau sold himself to the latter, and the court bought him over. He hazarded the stake of his fame for the prospect of a pension and an embassy; Cromwell was at the point of exchanging his future prospects for a title and the Order of the Garter. Notwithstanding his pride, he did not set a sufficient value upon himself; the superabundance of money and of places has since raised the price of men's consciences.

Death released Mirabeau from his promises, and rescued him from dangers which he would probably have been unable to overcome: his life would have demonstrated his incapacity for good; by his death he was left in the height of his power for evil.

* Mirabeau boasted of having a handsome hand; I have nothing to say against his notion; but I was very slender, and he extremely large, and his hand fairly covered my shoulder.

CLUBS.

ENGLAND had her factions and even her parties; what, however, were the *meetings* of the saints, of the puritans, of the levellers, of the agitators, compared with the clubs of our revolution? I have said elsewhere, in the *Genie du Christianisme*, that Milton had placed in his Hell an image of the perverseness to which he had been a witness: what sort of a picture would he have drawn, had he seen what I saw in Paris during the summer of 1792, when, returning from America, I passed through France in fulfilment of my destinies.

The King's flight, on the 21st of June, 1791, caused the revolution to take a prodigious stride. Brought back to Paris on the 25th of the same month, he was then dethroned for the first time, since the National Assembly declared that the decrees should have the force of laws, without

requiring the royal sanction or acceptance. A high court of justice was established at Orleans, and outstripped the revolutionary tribunal. At that very period, Madame Roland was clamorous for the Queen's head, little dreaming how soon her own would be called for by the revolution. The riotous assembly of the Champ de Mars had taken place, in opposition to the decree which suspended the King from his functions, instead of bringing him to trial. The acceptance of the constitution, on the 14th of September, failed to restore tranquillity. The decree of the 29th September, for the regulation of popular societies, only had the effect of increasing their violence; this was the last act of the Constituent Assembly; it separated on the following day, bequeathing to France an endless revolution.

The Legislative Assembly, installed on the 1st of October, 1791, rolled in the vortex which was to swallow up the living and the dead. Disturbances embrued the departments in blood; at Caen, the people were glutted with massacres, and feasted upon the heart of M. de Belzunce. The King set his *veto* to the decree against emigrants, and the public agitation was increased by this lawful act. Petion had become mayor of Paris. On the 1st of January, 1792, the deputies passed decrees of accusation against the emigrant princes;

on the 2nd, they fixed upon the preceding day, the 1st of January, for the commencement of the IVth year of liberty. The red caps were displayed in the streets of Paris towards the 13th of February, and the municipality ordered the manufacturing of pikes. On the 1st of March appeared the manifesto of the emigrants. Austria was arming. The treaty of Pilnitz, and the convention between the Emperor and the King of Prussia, were publicly known. Paris was divided into sections more or less hostile to each other. On the 20th of March, 1792, the Legislative Assembly adopted the sepulchral machine, without which the sentences of the Tribunal of Terror could not have been carried into effect; it was first tried upon the dead, that it might learn its business from them. We may consider this instrument in the light of an executioner, since many persons, well pleased with its services, made donations of money for its support. *

Roland the minister, or rather his astonishing wife, had been called to the king's council. War was declared, on the 20th of April, against the king of Hungary and Bohemia. Marat published *L'Ami du Peuple*, notwithstanding the decree levelled at his head. The royal German regiment

* Moniteur, No. 198.

and that of Berchini deserted. Isnard declaimed against court perfidy. Gensonné and Brissot denounced the Austrian committee. An insurrection broke out under the pretext afforded by the king's guard, which was disbanded on the 28th of May; the assembly formed itself into permanent sittings. On the 20th of June, the palace of the Tuileries was stormed by the mob of the fauxbourgs St. Antoine and St. Marceau, assuming as their motive the refusal of Louis XVI to sanction the proscription of the clergy; the king's life was placed in jeopardy; the country was decreed to be in danger. M. de la Fayette was burnt in effigy. The confederates of the second federation were approaching; the Marseillais, summoned by Danton, were in full march; they entered Paris on the 30th of July, and were quartered by Petion at the Cordeliers.

Beside the national assembly, two concurrent assemblies had arisen; the one of the Jacobins, the other of the Cordeliers, at that time the most formidable, as it sent members to the famous commune of Paris, and furnished it with means of action.

The club of the Cordeliers was established in the monastery of that name, the church of which had been built during the reign of St. Louis, in 1259, by means of a fine raised in atonement for

a murder*; it became, in 1590, the haunt of the most celebrated Leaguers. The pictures, the sculptured or painted images, the veils, the curtains, of the convent of the Cordeliers had been forcibly removed in 1792; the dismantled church presented to the eye a mere skeleton of its former self. In its apsis, where the wind and rain were admitted through its unglazed windows, carpenters' benches served as a seat for the president, when the meeting was held in the church. On these benches were laid the red caps which were worn by each speaker, before he ascended the tribune. This tribune consisted of four small rafters crossing one another in the form of an X, and having a plank laid upon them like a scaffold. Behind the president were seen, along with a statue of Liberty, the pretended instruments of torture of the former court of justice; all which instruments were replaced by a single one, the engine of blood, as complicated machines make way for the hydraulic ram. The club of the *refined* Jacobins borrowed from the Cordeliers some of these arrangements.

United for purposes of destruction, the speakers could not agree either as to the choice of leaders or the means to be employed. They called each other vagabonds, swindlers, thieves, murderers, amidst the discordant sounds of whis-

* It was burnt in 1580.

tles, and the howlings of their various groups of devils. Metaphors were drawn from the materials of murders, borrowed from the filthiest objects, from the laystall and the dunghill; or from places devoted to the prostitution of both sexes. Descriptions were illustrated by gestures; every thing was called by its proper name, with brutal impudence, amidst an obscene and impious parade of oaths and blasphemies. To destroy and beget, to kill and procreate, these words exclusively formed the savage cant which stunned our ears. The speakers, with shrill or thundering voices, were disturbed by others besides their opponents; the small dark owls of the cloister without monks, and of the steeple without bells, fluttered about the broken windows, in search of prey, and interrupted the speeches. They were at first called to order by the ringing of the powerless bell; but as they kept up their shrieks, muskets were fired to silence them; they fell panting, wounded, and prophetic, in the midst of this pandemonium. Broken down timber-work, tottering benches, scattered seats, fragments of saints, rolled and driven against the walls, were used as steps by the bespattered, dusty, drunken, sweating spectators, with torn jackets, bare arms crossed, or shouldered pikes.

DANTON.

The representatives at the Cordeliers were controlled and frequently presided over by Danton; a Hun, of Gothic size, with flat nose, broad nostrils, and pitted face; the like of this man could not easily have been moulded out of the materials of the English revolution; not even by a combination of Bradshaw, president of the commission which sat in judgment upon Charles I; Ireton, the renowned son-in-law of Cromwell; Axtell, the great destroyer in Ireland; Scott, who desired that his tomb should bear the inscription, "Here lies Thomas Scott, who condemned the late king to death;" Harrison, who said to his judges—"Several amongst you, my judges, took an active part with me in the events which have occurred in England; that which has been done was so done by order of Parliament, at that time the supreme law."

In the shell of this church, as in the skeleton of ages, Danton organised the attack of the 10th of August, and the massacres of September; the author of the circular addressed to the commune, he

invited all free men to re-enact in the departments the enormities perpetrated at the Carmelites and at the Abbaye. Did not, however, Sixtus V. assimilate, in respect to the salvation of mankind, the self-sacrifice of Jacques Clement to the mystery of the incarnation, just as Marat was compared to the Saviour of the world? Did not Charles IX. write to the governors of the provinces, directing them to imitate the massacres of St. Bartholomew, as Danton ordered the patriots to copy the massacres of September? The Jacobins are plagiarists; they were equally so when they immolated Louis XVI. in imitation of Charles I. Crimes having been found mixed up with the social movement of the close of the last century, the impression has incorrectly fixed itself upon some minds that the grandeur of the revolution was the result of those crimes, which were but its frightful and unprofitable excesses; the convulsion alone of a lofty nature in its throes has excited admiration

At the period when the play-things of children were little guillotines for birds; when the dead were removed to the burying-ground by a man in a red cap*; when the cry was "Hurrah for hell! hurrah for death;" when the joyous revels of

* Resolution of the General Council of the Commune, 27 Brumaire, 93.

blood, of steel, and of rage were celebrated; when annihilation was toasted; the last banquet, the last witticism of woe, could not fail to come in due turn.

Danton was caught in his own trap; brought before the tribunal, his own work, it availed him nothing to throw bread-balls at his judges, to answer with courage and dignity, to create hesitation in the revolutionary court, to intimidate and endanger the Convention, to argue logically respecting atrocities in which the very power of his enemies had originated.

Nothing remained for him but to show himself as insensible to his own death as he had been to that of others; to rear his proud head above the suspended sword. From the theatre of terror, where his feet stuck in the clotted blood of the preceding day, after casting a look of contempt at the crowd, he said to the executioner: "Thou wilt show my head to the people; it deserves to be seen by them." Danton's head remained in the executioner's hands, whilst the acephalous shade went to mingle with the decapitated shades of his victims: this was likewise equality.

THE PEOPLE OF BOTH NATIONS AT THE REVOLUTIONARY EPOCH.

ROYALIST PEASANTRY OF ENGLAND.

ARRAYED behind the Hampdens and Iretons, the English people possessed not the strength of that people who kept pace with the Mirabeaus and Dantons; a people who so nobly did its duty on the frontier, and drove foreign nations back to their own hearths; at the moment when they indulged the hope of sitting down by our fire-sides, and of quaffing the wine of our trellises, they quenched their own fires with their blood. Collectively taken, the people partakes of a poetic character; an animated author or actor in the performance in which it, either of its own free will, or reluctantly, plays a part, its very excesses are less the instinct of innate cruelty than the delirium of a crowd intoxicated with sights, especially those of a tragic character. This is so true that, in all scenes of

popular horror, something superfluous is always imparted to the picture and to emotion.

England had her civil wars: do they bear any resemblance to those of our western provinces? On those very occasions when our people were tearing each other to pieces, they were still wonderful in its excesses. But let us first consider the English peasant.

The cause of Charles I. and of his son produced many bold defenders among the rural population. The name of Pendrill, the farmer, and of his five brothers, is honourably recorded in the pages of history.

There is a little book entitled "Boscobel, or the History of his Sacred Majestie's most miraculous Preservation after the Battle of Worcester," in which is recorded the fidelity of the Pendrills. Charles II. having left Worcester at six in the evening of the 3rd of September, 1651, after the loss of the battle, arrived at four in the morning at White Ladies, a house belonging to Mr. Gifford, a recusant, in whose service the Pendrills lived. This house is distant about 29 miles from Worcester, and still retains the ancient name of White Ladies, from its having formerly been a monastery of Cistertian nuns, whose habit was of that colour.

"His Majesty had been advised to rub his

hands on the back of the chimney, and with these his face for a disguise, and some person had disorderly cut off his locks of hair: his majesty having put off his blue riband, buff coat, and other princely ornaments, and distributed the gold he had in his pocket among his servants, put on a noggen coarse shirt, which was borrowed of Edw. Marten, who served in the house, and Rich. Penderel's green suit and leather doublet, but had not time to be so exactly disguised as he was afterwards.

"Rich. Penderel conducted the king out at a back dore, and carried him into an adjacent wood belonging to Boscobel, call'd Spring Coppice. By the time Rich. Penderil had convey'd him into the obscurest part of it, it was about sunrising on Thursday morning; and the heavens wept bitterly at these calamities; insomuch as the thickest tree in the wood was not able to keep his majesty dry, nor was there any thing for him to sit on. Wherefore Rich. went to Francis Yates house (a trusty neighbour, who married his wife's sister), where he borrowed a blancket, which he folded and laid under a tree for his majesty to sit on.

"At the same time Rich. spoke to the goodwife Yates, to provide some victuals, and bring it into the wood at a place he appointed her. She

presently made ready a mess of milk and some butter and eggs, and brought them to his majesty in the wood; who, being a little surpriz'd to see the woman (no good concealer of a secret) said chearfully to her: 'Good woman, can you be faithful to a distressed cavalier?' She answered, 'Yes, Sir; I will die rather than discover you:' with which answer his majesty was well satisfied.

"On Thursday night his majesty resolved to go from those parts into Wales, and to take Richard Penderel with him for his guide; but before they began their journy, his majesty went into Richard's house at Hobbal Grange. Here his majesty had time and means better to complete his disguise; his name was agreed to be Will. Jones, and his arms a wood-bill . . . . . .

"At Evelin mill, Richard, thinking the miller had pursued them, quitted the usual way in some haste, and led his majesty over a little brook, which they were forced to wade through. Here his majesty (as he afterwards pleasantly observed) was in some danger of losing his guide, but that the rusling of Richard's calves-skin breeches was the best direction his majesty had to follow him in that dark night."

All the passes of the Severn being guarded Penderel resolved to proceed to Boscobel House, where his brother William lived. Here the wife

of the latter " made his majesty a posset of thin milk and small beer, and got ready some water to wash his feet, not onely extreme dirty, but much galled with travail. Colonel Carlis [who had also escaped from Worcester, and rejoined the king at Boscobel] pull'd off his majestie's shoos, which were full of gravel, and stockens which were very wet, and there being no other shoos in the house that would fit his majesty, the good-wife put some hot embers in those to dry them, whilst his majesties feet were washing and his stockens shifted."

I now take up another historian. I once had a friend in common with M. de Fontanes; I know not whether, in the silence of his tomb, he would be beholden to me for revealing the pure and generous career which he concealed from the public gaze. His only productions were a few articles, without his signature, which appeared in various newspapers; amongst these was an essay on *Boscobel*. Be it permitted to friendship to quote some short fragments from this essay: they will raise the regret of all men of feeling at the loss of real merit; they are the only vestige of the steps imprinted by solitary and unknown talent on the shore of life during the progress of its career.

" Carless," says Mr. Joubert, " was one of the most distinguished leaders of the king's army; he

had fought to the last extremity at the battle of Worcester. Finding that all was lost, he had boldly placed himself, with the Earl of Clive and James Hamilton, at one of the gates of the conquered city, to arrest the victors, and check the pursuit of the vanquished. He maintained his post, which was of his own selection, until he hoped that his master had found time to escape, and was beyond the reach of danger: then, alone, he effected his retreat, and was proceeding to seek an asylum at his own habitation, not knowing the fate of Charles, or whether he should ever behold him again, when chance presented him to his view.

"Their delight at the unexpected meeting may readily be imagined. Then it was that they dwelt in that celebrated oak, which was ever after held in such admiration, and which, when pointed out to the traveller, was called *The King's Palace.* This oak was of such dimensions, and so loaded with branches, that it would have held twenty men on its top. Exhausted with fatigue, Charles needed repose; he dared not indulge in it on the tree, or quit it without danger of being discovered: suspended as it were over an abyss, and concealed among the branches, the slightest slumber might have hurled him to the ground. Carless was strong; he undertook to keep watch. The King

placed himself in his arms, leant on his breast, and, supported by his valiant hands, fell asleep in the air.

"How affecting was the sight! A prince in the bloom and vigour of youth, reduced by somnolency to the weakness of childhood, giving way in drowsiness, with all the facility of that age, quietly sleeping, amidst so many dangers, in the arms of an austere man, of a vigilant warrior, watching over his king of one-and-twenty with all the anxiety of a mother! Thus places, trees, and forests, have their destiny as well as men.

"Charles soon quitted Boscobel. One day, in the parlour of an inn, as he took off his hat to the lady of the house who happened to pass by, the butler attentively fixed and recognised him. This man drew him aside, begged him to go down to the cellar with him, and there, filling a cup with wine, drank success to the king. 'I know who you are,' he then said, bending his knee to the ground, 'and shall be true to you unto death.'"

The friend I have lost has thus recalled to my mind those forgotten scenes: he is gone to join those men of former days.

Does not the reader picture to himself in this narrative an episode of our wars in the western provinces during the revolution? Fidelity seems to be one of the virtues peculiar to the old Chris-

tian religion: the Pendrills adhered to the faith of their forefathers; they had a hiding place where the priest said his mass; their Protestant king found in it a sacred asylum at the foot of the old Catholic altar. To complete the resemblance, the Countess of Derby, who so valiantly defended the Isle of Man, and was the last person in the three kingdoms who submitted to the Commonwealth, was of the family of La Tremouille; the Prince of Talmont was one of the last victims of Vendean wars.

PORTRAIT OF A VENDEAN.

BE it as it may with regard to the wood-cutters of Boscobel, near the now fallen *royal oak*, is the character of the Pendrills that of the Vendean peasants?

Whilst residing in London in 1798, I once met at the residence of the chargé d'affaires of th French princes, a crowd of dealers in counter-revolutions. There stood in the corner a man, who appeared to be from thirty to thirty-five years of age, unnoticed by all, and whose whole attention was fixed upon an engraving of the death of General Wolfe. Struck with his appearance, I inquired who he was. One of my neighbours replied, " He is nobody—a Vendean peasant; the bearer of a letter from his chiefs."

This man, who was nobody, had witnessed the death of Cathelineau, the first general of La Vendée, and a peasant like himself; of Bonchamp, in whom Bayard seemed to have revived; of Les-

cure, armed with a hair-cloth, which was not proof against a ball; of Elbée, shot in an arm-chair, his wounds preventing him from encountering death standing; of La Rochejaquelin, whose dead body was ordered by the patriots to be *verified*, with a view to tranquillise the Convention in the midst of its victories over Europe. This man, who was nobody, had assisted at the two hundred captures and re-captures of towns, villages, and redoubts; at the seven hundred partial actions and the seventeen general engagements; he had taken part in the struggles against three hundred thousand regulars, and six or seven hundred thousand forced levies and national guards; had helped to carry off five hundred pieces of cannon, and a hundred and fifty thousand muskets; had forced his way through the *infernal columns*, companies of incendiaries headed by conventionalists; had found himself in the midst of the ocean of fire, which thrice rolled its waves over the woods of La Vendée; lastly, he had witnessed the destruction of three hundred thousand Hercules of the plough, companions of his labours, and had seen a hundred square leagues of country converted into a wilderness of ashes.

The two Frances met on this soil which they had thus levelled. Whatever remained of old blood and of recollections in the France of the Crusades struggled against the new blood and the

hopes put forth by revolutionary France. The victor was sensible of the dignity of the conquered: Thurot, the general of the republicans, declared that "history would assign to the Vendeans the first rank amongst military populations." Another general wrote to Merlin of Thionville: "Troops that have defeated Frenchmen such as these may well hope to conquer all other nations." The legions of Probus said as much, in their songs, respecting our forefathers. The battles of La Vendée were called by Bonaparte "Battles of Giants."

I was the only one of the crowd in the apartments who looked with admiration and respect upon the representative of those boors of old who, whilst breaking the yoke of their lords, repelled, under Charles V., the invasion of foreigners; I fancied I beheld in him an inhabitant of those communes which, aided by the petty provincial nobility, in the days of Charles VII., re-conquered, furrow by furrow, inch by inch, the territory of France. He had that air of indifference which marks the savage; his eye was grey and inflexible as an iron rod; his lower lip trembled under his clenched teeth; his hair fell from his head like snakes, benumbed but ready to rear themselves; his arms, hanging by his side, gave a nervous shock to enormous fists slashed with sabre cuts; he might have been taken for a sawyer. His physi-

ognomy expressed a plebeian rustic nature, brought by a moral force into the service of interests and ideas at variance with that nature; the unaffected fidelity of the vassal, the simple faith of the Christian, were blended in him with rude plebeian independence, accustomed to value itself, and to revenge its own wrongs. His sense of liberty seemed to spring from the consciousness of the strength of his arm and of the intrepidity of his heart. He was as silent as a lion, scratched himself like a lion, yawned like a lion, stretched on his side like a wearied lion, and appeared to dream of blood and forests; his intelligence was akin to that of death. What men were the French of those days, be their party what it might, and what a race have we become at the present day! But the republicans had their principle in them, in the very midst of them, whereas the principle of the Royalists was out of France. The Vendeans sent deputations to the emigrants; the giants sent to solicit leaders from the pigmies. The rustic messenger I was contemplating had taken the revolution by the throat; he had exclaimed,—"Come in; pass behind me; it will not hurt you; it shall not stir; I have a strong hold of it." No one was willing to pass; Jacques Bonhomme then released the revolution from his gripe, and Charette shivered his sword.

CROMWELL—BONAPARTE.

RESCUED from a rustic grasp, the revolution fell into warlike hands: Bonaparte pounced upon and chained it down.

I have already compared the stature of that extraordinary man with that of Washington; it remains to be seen whether we have found in the Protector of England the equal to Napoleon.

Cromwell partook of the characters of priest, tyrant, and great man; his genius compensated his country for the loss of liberty. He had too much energy to succeed in creating any other power than his own; he ruined the institutions which he found or attempted to establish, just as Michael Angelo broke the marble under his chisel.

If the conqueror of the Irish and Scotch had been transferred to the stage of Napoleon, would he have been the conqueror of the Austrians, the Prussians, and the Russians? Unlike Bonaparte,

Cromwell did not create institutions, did not leave a code and an administration which still govern France and a great part of Europe. Napoleon reacted with an overstrained force; but he had an excuse in the necessity of crushing anarchy; his vigorous arm plunged his sword with too violent a thrust, and so that, passing through Anarchy, it pierced Liberty, who was behind her.

Vanquished nations have called Napoleon a scourge; the scourges of God retain something of the eternity and the majesty of the wrath from which they emanate: *Ossa arida . . . . dabo vobis spiritum, et viveris*—"Dry bones . . I will breathe upon you, and ye shall live." Bonaparte gave manifestations of this breath or this strength during the whole period of his career. Born in an island, and ending his days in another island, placed on the limits of three continents, thrown in the midst of those seas where Camoëns seemed to prognosticate his coming when he made it the abode of the Spirit of Storms, Bonaparte could not stir upon his rock without our being apprised of it by the concussion which he created; a step of the new Adamastor at the furthest pole was heard and felt at ours. Had Napoleon escaped from his gaolers and fled to the United States, his looks fixed upon the ocean would have sufficed to disturb the natives of the old world. His mere presence

on the American shore of the Atlantic would have compelled Europe to encamp on the opposite shore.

When Napoleon for the second time quitted France, it was asserted that he ought to have buried himself under the ruins of his last battle. Lord Byron, in his satirical ode against Napoleon, says:

> To die a prince—or live a slave,
> Thy choice is most ignobly brave.

This was an incorrect estimate of the hope still kindling in a soul accustomed to dominion and thirsting after the future. Lord Byron imagined that the dictator of kings had abdicated his fame with his sword, that he was about to die away in utter oblivion; Lord Byron should have known that the destiny of Napoleon was a Muse, like all other great destinies; this Muse knew how to change an abortive catastrophe into a sudden turn of fortune which would have revived and imparted fresh youth to its hero. The solitude of Napoleon, in his exile and in his tomb, has thrown another kind of spell over a brilliant memory. Alexander did not die in sight of Greece; he disappeared amid the pomp of distant Babylon: Bonaparte did not close his eyes in the presence of France; he passed away in the gorgeous horizons of the torrid zone. The man who had shown himself in such powerful reality vanished like a dream; his life, which belonged to history, co-operated in the

poetry of his death. He now sleeps for ever, like a hermit or a paria, beneath a willow, in a narrow valley surrounded by steep rocks, at the extremity of a lonely path. The depth of the silence which presses upon him can only be compared to the vastness of that tumult which had surrounded him. Nations are absent; their throng has retired. The bird of the tropics, harnessed to the car of the sun, as Buffon magnificently expresses it, speeding his flight downwards from the planet of light, rests alone for a moment over ashes the weight of which has shaken the equilibrium of the globe.

Bonaparte crossed the ocean, to repair to his final exile, regardless of that beautiful sky which delighted Columbus, Vasco de Gama, and Camoëns; stretched upon the ship's stern, he perceived not that unknown constellations were sparkling over his head; his powerful glance for the first time encountered their rays. What to him were stars which he had never seen from his bivouacs, and which had never shone over his empire? Nevertheless, not one of them has failed to fulfil its destiny; one-half of the firmament spread its light over his cradle; the other half was reserved to illuminate his tomb.

LOVELACE.

MY DETENTION AT THE PREFECTURE OF THE POLICE. GOD SAVE THE KING.

REVERTING from these political incidents to the subject of literature, and resuming it at the commencement of the restoration of Charles II. under which we have recorded the death of Milton, an observation at once suggests itself.

In the contest carried on between royalty and the people, the republican principle had Milton for its poet, the monarchical principle, Lovelace for its bard: from these may be deduced the consequence of the relative energy of both principles.

Confined in the Gate-house at Westminster, under an order from the Commons, Lovelace composed the elegant and loyal song, which was long a favourite with the *Cavaliers*.

TO ALTHEA, FROM PRISON.

When Love with unconfined wings
Hovers within my gates
And my divine Althea brings,
To whisper at the grates:
When I lye tangled in her haire,
And fetter'd to her eye;
The gods that wanton in the aire
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our carelesse heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyall flames;
When thirsty griefe in wine we steepe,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deepe
Know no such libertie.

When (like committed linnets) I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King:
When I shall voyce aloud, how good
He is, how great should be,
Inlarged winds that curle the flood
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls doe not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Mindes innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soule am free;
Angels alone that soar above,
Injoy such liberty.

Noble and generous sentiments! nevertheless they did not rescue Lovelace from oblivion, whilst the apologist of the murder of Charles I. has taken his stand by the side of Homer. In the first place, Lovelace was not gifted with the genius of Milton; again, he belonged, by his very nature, to ideas no longer current. Fidelity must ever command admiration; modern generations, however, are at a loss to account for such devotedness in an individual, for a virtue so confined within the limits of a particular system or attachment; they feel not the appeals of honour, whether they be insensible to that honour which is indispensible for the current apprehension of its dictates, or that they exclusively sympathise with humanity in its general acceptation,—a course, however, calculated to justify any base action. Montrose, as it is said by Cardinal de Retz, was not one of Plutarch's characters: he was one of those men, the relics of an age which expires at the dawn of a new age; their ancient virtues are as lofty as their new ones, but they are unprolific; planted in an exhausted soil, they are no longer fertilised by the national manners.

Gifted with the most fascinating manners, Colonel Richard Lovelace, whose name was perhaps borrowed by Richardson, in remembrance of his elegance, died neglected in obscurity and want.

Without being young and handsome, like Colonel Lovelace, I have been, like him, incarcerated. The governments which ruled France from 1800 to 1830 had exercised some forbearance towards a votary of the muses; Bonaparte, whom I had fiercely attacked in the Mercure, was at first prompted to despatch me; he raised his sword, but he struck not. "

A generous and liberal administration, exclusively composed of literary men, of poets, writers, editors of newspapers, has proved less ceremonious towards an old comrade.

My kennel, somewhat longer than it was broad, was seven or eight feet high. The stained and bare wainscot was covered with the poetry and prose scrawled upon it by my predecessors. A pallet with soiled sheets occupied three parts of my habitation; a board supported by two trestles, placed against the wall at an elevation of two feet above the bed, served the purpose of a press for the linen, boots, and shoes of the prisoner. A chair, a table, and a small cask, as a disgusting convenience, formed the remainder of the furniture. A grated window opened at a considerable height; I was forced to mount upon the table in order to breathe fresh air, and to enjoy the light of heaven. I could only distinguish through the bars of my felon's cage, a gloomy narrow court,

and dark buildings, round which the bats kept fluttering. I heard the clank of keys and chains, the noise of the *sergens de ville* and spies, the pacing of soldiers, the ground of arms, the shrieks, the laughter, the obscene licentious songs of the prisoners, my neighbours, the howlings of Benoit, condemned to death as the murderer of his mother, and of his obscene friend. I could distinguish these words of Benoit, amidst his confused exclamations of fear and repentance: "Alas! my mother! my poor mother!" I beheld the wrong side of society, the sons of humanity, the hideous machinery which sets in motion this world, so smiling to look at in front, when the curtain is raised.

The genius of my former greatness and of my *glory*, represented by a life of thirty years, did not make its appearance before me; but my Muse of former days, poor and humble as she was, came all radiant to embrace me through my window; she was delighted with my abode, and full of inspiration; she found me again as she had seen me in London, in the days of my poverty, when the first dreams of Réné were floating in my mind. What were we, the solitary of Pindus and I, about to produce together? A song, in the style of Lovelace. Upon whom? Upon a king? Assuredly not! The voice of a prisoner would have

been of bad omen: it is only from the foot of our altars that hymns should be addressed to misfortune. None, moreover, but a poet of great renown can be listened to when he sings:

O toi, de ma pitié profonde
Reçois l'hommage solennel,
Humble objet des regards du monde,
Privé du regard paternel!
Puisses-tu, né dans la souffrance,
Et de ta mère et de la France
Consoler la longue douleur *!

My song was not therefore of a crown fallen from an innocent brow; I was content with celebrating a different crown—a white one too, laid on the coffin of a young maiden †.

Tu dors, pauvre Elisa, si légère d'années!
Tu ne sens plus du jour le poids et la chaleur:
Vous avez achevé vos fraiches matinées,
Jeune fille et jeune fleur.

The prefect of police, with whose behaviour I have every reason to be satisfied, offered me a more suitable asylum, as soon as he was made acquainted with the agreeable abode which the friends of the liberty of the press had considerately assigned to me for having availed myself of that liberty. The window of my new dwelling opened upon a cheerful garden. It was not enlivened by the

* V. Hugo, *Odes et Ballades*. † Elisa Trisel.

warbling of Lovelace's linnet; but it abounded in frisky, light, chirping, bold, quarrelsome sparrows; they are found every where, in the country, in town, on the balustrades of a mansion, along the gutters of a prison; they perch quite as cheerfully upon the instrument of death as upon a rose-bush. What matter the sufferings of earth to those who can fly away further."

My song will not be more lasting than that of Lovelace. The Jacobites have left nothing to England but the anthem *God save the King.* The origin of this air is not uninteresting: it is ascribed to Lulli; the young maids, in the choruses to *Esther,* delighted, at St. Cyr, the ears and the pride of the great monarch by the strains of the *Domine, salvum fac regem.* The attendants of James carried to their country the majestic invocation; they addressed it to the god of armies, when they marched to battle in defence of their banished sovereign. Struck with the beauty of this loyal song, the English of William's faction appropriated it to themselves. It became an appendage to the usurpation and to the sovereignty of the people, who are ignorant at this day that they are singing a foreign air, the hymn of the Stuarts, the canticle of divine right and of legitimacy. How long will England yet implore the Ruler of the world to *save the king?* Reckon

the revolutions heaped up in a dozen notes, which, have outlived these revolutions!

The *Domine salvum* of the Catholic rite is, likewise, an admirable song: it was sung in Greek in the tenth century, when the hippodrome was graced with the emperor's presence. From the pageant it was transferred to the church: another era that has passed away.

PROSE.,

TILLOTSON—TEMPLE—BURNET—CLARENDON—ALGERNON SIDNEY.

WITH the reign of Charles II. a revolution took place in the taste and manners of English writers. Forsaking the national traditions, they began to borrow from French literature some of its regularity and character. The wandering life of Charles had given him a preference for foreign manners; Madame Henriette, the king's sister, the Duchess of Portsmouth, his mistress, St. Evremond, and the Chevalier de Grammont, both living in London in a state of banishment, urged with all their might the restored Stuarts to an imitation of the court of Louis XIV.; poetry lost by this external movement, which, however, proved advantageous to prose. Without soaring to the height of eloquence, Tillotson refined the language of the pulpit. Sir William Temple was the

D'Ossat of England; but in the views and the style of his *Observations*, his *Miscellaneous Works*, and his *Memoirs*, he is far inferior to our diplomatist. Philosophy boasts of Locke; literature, properly so called, of Hamilton, a model of gracefulness and elegance; of Shaftesbury, the pupil of Locke, and the son of a dissolute father. Voltaire extols Shaftesbury as an enemy of the Christian religion. This author's works have been collected under the title of *Characteristics of Men*. The ideas of the *Characteristics*, besides being lamely expressed, have become common-place by the lapse of time.

Burnet wrote the History of the English Reformation in a partial, caustic, but interesting manner: his greatest honour consists in having been refuted by Bossuet. Burnet was a blunderer and a factious man, of a spirit akin to that of the Frondeurs: neither the revolutionary candour of Whitelocke, nor the republican enthusiasm of Ludlow, is to be found in his memoirs.

The name of Clarendon revives the double recollection of kingly and popular ingratitude. The *History of the Rebellion* is a work in which the indications of talent disappear under the impress of virtue. Some portraits are vividly coloured; but the character of these portraits is easy of imitation; it is within the reach of the

commonest minds; Clarendon himself is reflected in his pictures; his image is portrayed in every page.

Algernon Sidney created the language of politics; his *Discourses upon Government* have grown obsolete: Sidney's is but a great name, and by no means a great reputation. The tragical death of the son of the Earl of Leicester is the ostensible event which gave body to principles which are still vague in the wavering opposition of the Whigs. Dalrymple, and after him M. Mazure, have furnished evidence of the inconsistencies of Sidney; he had the misfortune to receive money from France. In the unskilful game played by Louis XIV., this monarch fancied that he was only fettering Charles, whilst he was overthrowing James; the corruption of this policy carried within itself its own punishment; integrity, in Bacon, did not keep pace with science; in Sydney, disinterestedness did not keep pace with energy. God preserve us from exulting over the meannesses from which the loftiest natures are not altogether exempt! Heaven never endows us with virtues or talents, without coupling them with infirmities; they are expiations offered to vice, to folly, and to envy. The weaknesses of a superior mind are those black victims, *nigræ pecudes*, which Antiquity sacrificed to the infernal gods;

and yet they never suffer themselves to be appeased.

The revolution of 1688 arose from the scaffold Sidney, with the steam of the blood of the holocaust! This bloody dew is now falling, and the England of 1688 is disappearing.

POETRY.

DRYDEN—PRIOR—WALLER—BUCKINGHAM—ROSCOMMON—ROCHESTER—SHAFTESBURY, &c.

It may seem parodoxical to assert that English poetry suffered from the inroad of French taste, at the very moment when Dryden appeared upon the stage; but every language which divests itself of its originality, to addict itself to imitation, spoils, even whilst it improves, itself. Shakspeare and Milton remained purely English; how far have they not left Dryden behind them!

The spirit of the revolution of 1649 was derived from religious enthusiasm and moral austerity; the restoration of 1660 was that of indifference and libertinism. "You are the worst subject in my kingdom," said Charles II. to Shaftesbury; "Very true, Sire," was his reply; "your Majesty is not a subject."

These re-actions are unavoidable: the moroseness

of the close of the reign of Louis XIV. was followed by the corruption of the Regency. When the Reign of Terror ceased, the most barefaced immorality was at its height; in sight of the still warm and palpitating corpses of parents, whose heads were clasped in the arms or rolling at the feet of their children, these children indulged in the amusement of balls and dancing.

Dryden corrected and gave a finish to English poetry, in imitation of all civilised languages, which have called art to the aid of nature, and subjected the latter to rules. Pope thus characterises the merit of Dryden:

> Dryden taught to join
> The varying verse, the full resounding line,
> The long majestic march, and energy divine.

This opinion proves that we are no longer in the unfettered days of the author of *Macbeth*, but that we have reached Boileau's academic age.

Dryden is himself the founder of criticism among his fellow-countrymen; his dialogues and dramatic poetry are still read. He laboured during thirty years for the stage, without attaining the nature and vividness of Shakspeare, or the pathos of Otway. "Dryden who was, in other respects, a great genius," says Voltaire, "makes his enamoured heroes speak a language of rhete-

rical hyperboles, or of indecency, both equally opposed to genuine tenderness."

Shirley, Davenant, Otway, Congreve, Farquhar, Cibber, Steele, Colman, Foote, Rowe, Addison, Moore, Aaron Hill, Sheridan, Coleridge, &c., exhibit the succession of English dramatic poets up to the present day. Tobin, Joanna Baillie, and a few others, have attempted to revive the old style and the old theatrical forms.

As for Dryden, the man, he was an unhappy creature; Prior, a young partisan of the house of Orange, attacked the old poet, who had turned Catholic, and remained true to his old masters. Assisted by his friends, the Duke of Buckingham composed the charming comedy of *The Rehearsal.* This piece assailed the author of *Don Sebastian,* and the ode of *Alexander's Feast.* Buckingham was proud of having injured Dryden's reputation. Can it then be so great a satisfaction to mortify genius, and rob it of a share of the glory it has acquired, at the cost of such labours, mortifications, and sacrifices?

Waller, Buckingham, Roscommon, Rochester, Shaftesbury, and a few other licentious and satirical poets, were not the first literary characters of their day, but they gave the tone to the literature in fashion during the reign of Charles II. The son of Charles I. was one of those frivolous, witty,

careless, selfish men, devoid of all sincere attachments, of all inward convictions, who not unfrequently take their place between two historical periods, to close the one as it were, and to commence the other; one of those princes, whose reign serves as a transition to important changes in the institutions, manners, and ideas of nations; one of those princes expressly created to fill up the voids which frequently in the political order disjoin cause from effect. Exhumations and executions opened a reign which executions were destined to close. Twenty-two years of libertinism were passed beneath gibbets; they were the last years of joy, after the Stuart fashion, and resemble funereal orgies.

Disowned under James I., embrued with blood under Charles I., disgraced under Charles II., assailed under James II., liberty had nevertheless been preserved under constitutional forms; by these forms it was transmitted to the nation, which continued to fertilise the native soil after the expulsion of the Stuarts. These princes never could forgive the sufferings brought upon them by the English people; the people never could forget the attempts made by these princes to strip them of their rights; there existed on both sides too many causes of resentment and of offence. All mutual confidence was destroyed; each party silently

watched the other for some years. These generations that had suffered together, alike exhausted, agreed to end their days together; but the rising generations, which felt not this lassitude, and harboured no enmity, had no need to enter into such compromises of misfortune; they claimed the fruits of the blood and tears of their fathers: it became necessary to bid farewell to the things of the past.

The above-named writers possessed all the qualifications requisite for shining in the bivouac of a night's halt, between the popular reign of Cromwell and the reign of the Parliaments of William and his successors. The servile House of Commons now existed only to destroy the asserters of liberty, who had formerly constituted its strength; the monarchy, on the other hand, suffered its most devoted servants to perish. The people and the king appeared mutually to abandon each other, to make way for the aristocracy; the scaffold of Charles I. separated them for ever.

BUTLER.—NEGLCETED WRITERS.

BUTLER stands in the first line, as a deposing witness in the trial of ingratitude instituted against the memory of Charles II.: Charles knew by heart the verses of *Hudibras*, a political Don Quixote. This satire, so replete with sallies against the actors in the revolution, delighted a court distinguished by the licentiousness of Rochester and the graceful manner of Grammont; ridicule was a species of revenge adapted to courtiers.

Those who are placed at a distance from events, who have not lived in the midst of factions and of factious men, are only struck by the serious or the painful side of occurrences; such is not the case with an actor or a spectator compromised in scenes of blood.

Tacitus, whom nature had formed a poet, might have written the satires of Petronius, had he sat in Nero's senate; he portrayed the tyranny of that

prince because he lived after his time; Butler, endowed with a penetrating mind, might have written the history of Charles I., had he been born in Queen Anne's reign; he contented himself with throwing *Hudibras* into rhyme, because he had seen the actors in Cromwell's revolution; he had seen them, though always talking of independence, holding out their hands to every chain, and, after putting the father to death, submitting to the yoke of the son.

Nevertheless, the subject of Butler's poem, a poem in which the eldest son of the Duke of Buckingham lent his assistance, is less felicitous than that of the satire *Menippée*. It was allowable to laugh at the League in spite of its horrors; the railleries of which it was the object had a chance of duration, because the League was not a revolution; it was no more than a sedition, from which no advantage accrued to mankind. The men of that protracted sedition, L'Hôpital alone excepted, were only individually great; their course was not marked by any political idea, or principle, or institution, useful to society. The League assassinated Henry III., who exceeded it in devotion, and it combated Henry IV., who conquered and bought it off. It disappeared, without leaving any traces of its passage; its only echo was the Fronde,

a wretched broil, which merged in the absolute power of Louis XIV.

But the commotions in England, in 1649, were of a far more serious nature; the question was not of a duel between ambitious princes; the struggle was between the people and the king, between the commonwealth and the monarchy: the sovereign was tried in solemn form and put to death; the popular chief who brought him to the block and succeeded him, was no less a one than Cromwell: *there was found a man.*

The dictatorship over the people, personified in a tribune, lasted nine years; it bore away absolute monarchy in its retreat, and deposited in the industry of England the germ of her power, *the Navigation Act.* The rebound of the revolution of 1649 produced the revolution of 1688, a result of prodigious importance.

These are the reasons why we no longer laugh at the railleries of *Hudibras,* as we do at the jests of the *Menippée.* The consequences of the troubles in the reign of Charles I. are still felt over the world; the atrocities of St. Bartholomew, the enormities arising from the profligacy of Henry III., and the ambition of the Guises, have only left a horror of the memory of those atrocities and excesses. Could an author, who

should attempt to compose a burlesque poem upon the revolution of 1789 succeed in enlivening the Reign of Terror or in lessening Bonaparte? The parodies which remain are furnished only by events that have passed away; they resemble the masks moulded on the face of a dead man which has since crumbled to dust, or on that of a satyr whose bust is no longer to be found.

A catalogue has been drawn up of the royalists who suffered in the cause of Charles I.; extensive as it is, Charles II. further augmented it. Waller, a cowardly conspirator under the Commonwealth, a fawning poet of the successful usurpation, obtained every favour from restored legitimacy, whilst Butler was dying of hunger. Crowns have their impurities as well as red caps.

A fatal destiny pursues the muses: Valeriano Bolzani composed a treatise, "*De Litteratorum infelicitate;*" D'Israeli has published "*The Calamities of Authors:*" they are far from having exhausted the subject.

In the mere list of English poets whom I have named, we find the following:

James, King of Scotland, eighteen years a prisoner, and at last assassinated; Rivers, Surrey, and Thomas More, suffering on the scaffold; Lovelace and Butler, dying of want.

Clarendon, banished by Charles II., died at Rouen. The defence of the virtuous magistrate, whose writings, in conjunction with those of Falkland, had secured the triumph of the royal cause, was condemned to be burnt by the common hangman.

Milton, half proscribed, descended in utter blindness to the tomb.

Dryden, towards the close of his life, was compelled to sell his talents piece-meal, to support existence. "Little cause have I," said he, "to bless my stars for being born an Englishman; it is quite enough for one century that it should have neglected a Cowley, and seen Butler starved to death."

Otway, at a later period, choked himself in voraciously swallowing the morsel of bread thrown to him to relieve his hunger.

What were not the sufferings of Savage composing at street corners, writing his verses on scraps of paper picked out of the kennel, expiring *in a prison, and leaving his corpse to the pity of a gaoler, who defrayed the expense of his interment!*

Chatterton, after being many days without food, destroyed himself by poison.

In the cloisters of the cathedral of Worcester,

the stranger's notice is attracted by a sepulchral slab, without date, without a prayer, without a symbol; its only inscription is the word "*Miserrimus.*" Could this unknown, this nameless "*Miserrimus,*" have been any other than a man of genius?

END OF THE STUARTS.

AFTER the death of his brother, James II. ventured to attempt, in behalf of the Romish church, what his father had failed to accomplish in behalf of Episcopacy. He fancied that he could bring about a change in the religion of the state, as easily as Henry VIII. had done before him; but the English nation was no longer the nation of the Tudors; and if James had distributed among his subjects all the property of the church of England, he would not have made a single proselyte to the Catholic religion. His greatest error was that of having sworn, when he ascended the throne, what he had no intention to keep: rulers have not always been saved by the observance of oaths; a departure from them has frequently brought about their ruin.

James, naturally a cruel man, found an executioner ready at his command; Jefferies had commenced his misdeeds towards the close of the reign

of Charles II. at the trial which brought Russell and Sidney to the scaffold. This man, who after Monmouth's attempt caused upwards of two hundred and fifty persons to be executed in the west of England, was not devoid of some sense of justice: a virtue which fails to attract notice in a good man shines conspicuously in a wicked man.

Holland had long been the focus of the intrigues of the various English parties; the emissaries of these parties were then under the protection of Mary, James's eldest daughter, and consort of the Prince of Orange, a man for whom we feel no admiration, and who, nevertheless, did admirable things. James, though often warned by Louis XIV. disregarded all advice; William's fleet put to sea, and he landed with thirteen thousand men at Broxholme, in Torbay.

To his great astonishment, he found nobody there; he waited ten days in vain. What was James doing during these ten days? Nothing. He had an army of twenty thousand men, which would at first have fought under his banners; but he remained irresolute. Sunderland, his minister, betrayed him; he was abandoned by Prince George of Denmark, his son-in-law, and by Anne his favourite daughter, in the same manner as his daughter Mary, and William, his other son-in-law, had turned against him. Solitude began to spread

around the monarch who had separated himself from the national opinion. James asked advice of the Earl of Bedford, the father of Lord Russell, beheaded during the preceding reign at the instigation of James. "I had once a son," replied the old man, "who might have afforded you assistance."

James fled, and landed at Ambletuse, on the 2nd of January, 1689; baneful guest that he was, he taught exile to those hearths the altar of which he clasped. Where are the ashes of Louis XIV? Where are his descendants?

For the rest, what matters it? Lord Russell, embracing his lady for the last time, said to her, "This flesh you now feel will in a few hours be stiff in death." What space is filled in the world and in this page by the generations of which I have been treating? On my return to France, in 1800, I was travelling one night in the diligence; the vehicle made a slight jerk, which we scarcely felt: it had run over a drunken peasant stretched across the road: we had crushed out a human life, and the wheel had only been raised a few lines from the ground. The Franks, our forefathers, slaughtered the Romans taken by surprise, in the midst of a feast held at Metz; within the last quarter of a century our soldiers have waltzed at the convent of Alcobaça with the skeleton of Ines de Castro; sorrows and pleasures,

crimes and follies, ye are separated by a lapse of fourteen centuries, and ye are all as completely past, the one as the other! The eternity which has just commenced is as ancient as the eternity that dates from the first death, the murder of Abel. Men, nevertheless, during their ephemeral appearance on this globe, persuade themselves that they leave some trace behind them. No doubt, every fly has its shadow.

The four Stuarts passed away in the space of eighty-four years; the six last Bourbons who have worn, or were entitled to wear, the crown, reckoning from the death of Louis XV., have disappeared in the space of fifty-four years.

In both kingdoms a monarch has perished on the scaffold; and two restorations have taken place, and have been followed by the banishment of the legitimate sovereigns; it is nevertheless true, that Europe, or rather the world, so far from having reached the end of revolutions, is only at the commencement of them.

PART THE FIFTH.

LITERATURE UNDER THE HOUSE OF HANOVER.

COMPLETION AND PERFECTION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

DEATH OF LANGUAGES.

On quitting the Stuarts, we enter upon the state of repose of a hundred and forty years which succeeded the fall of those princes, and left the Muses at leisure to purify their language under the shelter of liberty.

I have spoken, in the beginning of this essay, of the origin of the English language; the successive changes in it may have been noticed in our rapid progress through ages. Let us now, that I am approaching the conclusion of my labour, consider what degree of perfection that language had attained, and how, after having been the idiom of the *conteors*, *fableors*, and *harpeors*, it became the idiom of the Popes, the Addisons, the Swifts, the Grays, the Fieldings, the Walter Scotts, and the Byrons.

The old English language appears to me to have been softer than the modern English; in the

former the *th* terminates a multitude of words, and the third person singular of the indicative present. The *th* borrowed from the East was not pronounced (though introduced into the Greek alphabet with the χ chi, the κ kappa, the ω omega) till about the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, at the period when Alcibiades turned the brains of the Athenians by the graceful difficulty with which he expressed certain letters of his language. The *th* was a compound letter, which the soft Ionian dialect seemed to supply in aid of the elegant pupil of Pericles. The modern Greek has retained the use of θ the theta.

The *th* of old English, at the end of a word, could only be the *soft* th, such as it is pronounced in *mouth*, *sooth*, *teeth*, and not the *rough* th, at the beginning of a word, as in *thunder*, *throbbing*, *thousand*.

Letters, in old English, were frequently doubled. The *e* which abounds and contends with the *th* for the end of words, was the mute *e* retained from the French. It contributed to soften the too sharp sound. The proof that these letters were not etymological but euphonic is that the orthography varied in every county, and almost in every village, according the ear, which is the echo of the accent. The very words varied in a radius of a few leagues.

According as the pronunciation and form of the English language underwent a change, and as it lost its sobriety, it enriched itself with the tributes of time. The genius of a language is composed of the religion, political institutions, character, manners, and customs of a people. If this people extends its conquests to a distance, it derives an increase of ideas and of sentiments from the countries with which it comes into contact. Let us first consider what a language may gather from the duration and diversity of the national laws.

It was laid down, as a principle, in England, that a law is never abolished: thus it happened that the history of the past was present to the mind amidst new events, as an ever-living grandmother in the midst of her numerous children and grandchildren. At the commencement of the present century, an Englishman threw down the gauntlet in full court, and challenged his adversary to the ordeal of battle.

The English common law governs the whole of England.

In the Isle of Man, *the constitutions* of the ancient kings of that state are still adhered to.

In Jersey and Guernsey, the statutes of Rollo are in full force.

The lawsuits of the Indians and Moguls are tried by appeal in the court of King's Bench held

in London, and they are decided in conformity with the articles of the Puranas and of the Koran.

In the Ionian islands, the Justinian code mingles with the decisions of the Admiralty Court.

In Canada, the ordinances of the kings of France flourish, as in the days of St. Louis.

The Isle of France is governed by the Code Napoleon; the Anglo-Spanish colonies are swayed by the Castilian and Aragonese laws; the Cape of Good Hope, by the Dutch law.

Politics, manufactures, commerce, have blended the technical expressions of their dictionaries with those of the general dictionary.

The Houses of Parliament supply to the common fund the speeches of Strafford, the Vanes, Bolingbroke, Walpole, the two Pitts, Burke, Fox, Sheridan, Canning, and Brougham.

The vocabulary is augmented in social economy, by the researches of Adam Smith, Malthus, Thornton, Ricardo, and Macculloch.

The service of the English possessions in the four quarters of the globe has naturally increased the number of travellers; what a fresh source for the importation of ideas and images! In 1600, one hundred and one London merchants collected a sum of 800,000 francs; and, behold! the Bacchuses and Alexanders, who became the masters and conquerors of India!

The English had Samaritan, Arabic, Syriac grammars and dictionaries almost before they had Greek and Latin dictionaries; they thus commenced with the study of the dead and living languages of Asia; they yielded to the instinct of their genius, which inclined them to the pomp of images and the independence of rules. Wilkins, Colebroke, Carey*, Marsden, Morrison, Lockhart, Gladwin, Lumsden, Gilchrist, Hadley, William Jones, have bestowed their attention on the Sanscrit, the vulgar Bengalee, the Malay language, the Persian, the Chinese, and the common language of Hindostan. Thus, with laws which never die, and with colonies placed at the four quarters of the compass, the English language alike embraces time aud space.

We formerly possessed boundless regions beyond sea; they offered a refuge to the excess of our population, a market for our commerce, a career for our sciences, a means of keeping up our navy: we are compelled, at the present day, to immure our convicts in unwholesome prisons, for want of a corner of the globe to serve as a receptacle for those wretched beings; we are excluded from the new universe, where mankind is beginning afresh.

* There is another Carey, a poet and musician, to whom the English incorrectly ascribe the tune of *God save the King*.

The English, Spanish, and Portuguese languages, form in Africa, Asia, the Oceanic islands, the islands of the South Sea, and the continents of both Americas, the medium for conveying the sentiments of many millions of men; whilst, disinherited from the conquests of our genius, we scarcely hear the language of Colbert and of Louis XIV. spoken any where but in a few districts of Louisiana and Canada, and in the dominion of strangers; there it remains as a record of our reverses of fortune and of the errors of our policy.

But, if the language of Milton and of Shakspeare derives positive advantages from this diffusion of power, it is exposed to attacks from that quarter. When confined to its native soil, it possessed a more individual, more original, more energetic character; on the banks of the Ganges and the St. Lawrence, at the Cape of Good Hope, at Port Jackson in New Holland, at the island of Malta in the Mediteranean, at the island of Trinidad in the Gulf of Mexico, it takes up expressions which corrupt it. Pickering has collected the words used in the United States: from his work we may see how rapidly a language changes under a foreign sky, from the necessity of furnishing expressions for a new culture, for an industry and arts peculiar to the soil, for habits generated by the climate, for laws and manners which constitute a different society.

If such an investigation could prove interesting, I would here follow the history of English words; I would show by what authors they were introduced, and how they have lost or changed their acceptation by departing from their primitive sense. I would treat of compound words, of negative words, in opposition to positive words, in which our language is too deficient, of words that are both substantives and verbs: *silence* for example signifies at once silence and to make silent, or to silence. But such researches, which would be extremely curious, were our language the object of them, (as it may be seen in the learned *Tableau* of M. Chasles*) would, in reference to a foreign language, be wearisome or unintelligible to the French reader.

It is only before languages have attained their highest polish that they follow the movement of civilisation: when they have once arrived at that point, they stand still for some time, then go down hill, and become corrupted. It is to be feared that superior talents will henceforth have but a discordant or cracked instrument to give forth their harmonies. A language may, it is true, acquire new expressions with the gradual advance of knowledge; but it cannot change its syntax without

* "Tableau de la Marche et des Progrès des Langues et de la Littérature Françaises," &c.

changing its genius. A happy barbarism remains in a language without disfiguring it; solecisms never gain a footing in it without destroying it. We may have a Tertullian, a Statius, a Silius Italicus, a Claudian; but shall we again have Bossuets, Corneilles, Racines, Voltaires. In a young language, authors have expressions and images which charm like the first beam of morning; in a language completely formed they are brilliant with beauties of every kind; in an aged language, the simplicities of style are but reminiscences, the sublimities of thought, but the produce of an arrangement of words, sought with labour and contrasted with effort.

EFFECT OF CRITICISM ON LANGUAGES.

CRITICISM IN FRANCE. OUR VANITIES. DEATH OF LANGUAGES.

Criticism, at first so useful, has become in London, from its abundance and its diversity, another source of deterioration in the monuments of the English language, by perplexing people's ideas as to the expressions, turns, and words, which they ought to reject, and such as it is right to employ. How can an author discover the truth among so many different opinions, pronounced upon the same work by the Monthly Review, the Critical Review, the Quarterly Review, the Edinburgh Review, the British Review, the Eclectic Review, the Retrospective Review, the Foreign Review, the Foreign Quarterly Review, the Literary Gazette, the London Museum, the Monthly Censor, the Monthly Magazine, the New Monthly Magazine, the Edinburgh Magazine, the Literary Magazine, the London Magazine, Blackwood's

Magazine, the Brighton Magazine, the Annual Register, the Classical Journal, the Quarterly Journal, the Edinburgh Philosophical Journal, the Monthly Repertory*? It would be easy to add a hundred other titles to this motley list, to which might, moreover, be added the literary articles in the daily newspapers.

In France we are not so rich, and our present judgments are less severe. It is possible that literature may appear a puerile occupation to the political and positive age which is commencing among us. If this is really the case, it must be obvious that a writer has very little temptation to create himself a host of enemies, for the satisfaction of upholding the genuine principles of art and taste, in a career in which there is no longer either glory or honours to be acquired.

One critic has of late years ventured to exercise a rigorous censorship: what outcries has he not occasioned? What, then, would the writers of the present day have said, if they had been treated as we were formerly treated! May I be permitted to mention myself as an instance? I had a host of clever men against me: when Atala appeared, the classic army, headed by the Abbé Morellet,

* Persons acquainted with English Literature need not be told that many of the periodicals enumerated here are no longer in existence.—Translator.

rushed upon my Florida maiden. The "Genie du Christianisme" roused the whole Voltairian world: it drew upon me admonitions from the most distinguished members of the French Academy. M. Ginguené, examining my work two months after its publication, is apprehensive that his criticism comes too late, the "Genie du Christianisme" being already forgotten. The very clever M. Hoffmann lashed the "Martyrs" in five or six articles of the Journal de l'Empire, then taken from its proprietors, which journal thus proclaimed my speedy end in the vast circle traced by the sword of Napoleon. And what did we—we poor aspirants to renown? Did we think that the whole world was shaken to its foundation? Had we recourse to charcoal or the pistol to rid ourselves of our own lives or of the censor? Full of our own merits, did we obstinately and proudly persist in our faults, determined to conquer the age, and to make it pass under the yoke of our follies? Alas! no: more humble, because we cannot boast the unrivalled talents which now-a-days run the streets, we sought in the first place to justify, and in the next to correct, ourselves. If we had been attacked in too unjust a manner, the tears of the Muses bathed and healed our wounds: in short, we were persuaded that criticism has never killed what ought to live, and still

more that it never imparted life to what ought to die.

Expect not now-a-days so modest and so silly a condescension from our writers. Vanity has exalted itself into frenzy: pride is the disease of the time: we no longer blush to confess our own merits and to proclaim all the gifts which bountiful Nature has bestowed upon us. Hear us speak of ourselves: we have the kindness to take upon ourselves all the expense of the praises which people were preparing to give us; we charitably enlighten the reader respecting our merits; we teach him to relish our beauties; we soothe his enthusiasm; we seek his admiration at the bottom of his heart; we spare his delicacy the task of discovering it to us himself.

Every one of us, in his conscience and most sincerely, believes himself to be the man of our age; the man who has opened a new career; the man who has eclipsed the past; the man in whose presence all reputations dwindle to nothing; the man who will survive and alone survive; the man of posterity, the man of the renovation of things, the man of the future. Happy the day that witnessed our birth! Happy the society that bore us in its womb! Amidst the effusions of our pride, the good folks run the risk of being stifled; they are almost obliged to arm themselves with vanity

in self-defence against that of the passenger; as in a pot-house we are forced to smoke ourselves to repel the fumes of our neighbour's pipe.

To be just, however, we must admit that, if the criticism of detail has lost its power, from the want of acknowledged rules, from the revolt of hardened self-love, historical and general criticism has made considerable advances. I am not aware that at any period there was to be found in any country an assemblage of men so learned, so distinguished, as those who at this day grace the public chairs in France.

What will be the fate of the English language? That which is the fate of all languages. About the year 1400, a Prussian poet, at a banquet given by the grand-master of the Teutonic order, sang in old Prussian the heroic achievements of the ancient warriors of the country: nobody understood him, and one hundred empty walnuts were given to him by way of reward. At the present day, the Low Breton, the Basque, and the Welsh, are dying off from hut to hut, in proportion as the herdsmen and labourers die away. In the English county of Cornwall, the native language became extinct about the year 1676. A fisherman said to some travellers, "I know but four or five persons who speak British, and they are old people, like myself, of between sixty and eighty."

Tribes which once inhabited the banks of the Oronoko no longer exist. Nothing is left of their language but a dozen words uttered in the tops of the trees by parrots, which have regained their liberty. Agrippina's thrush chattered Greek words on the balustrades of Latin palaces. Such will be sooner or later the fate of our modern jargons: some starling of New Place will whistle from the top of an apple-tree verses of Shakspeare's, unintelligible to the passenger; some raven, escaped from the cage of the last Franco-Gaulish *curé*, will say from the ruinous steeple of a forsaken cathedral to the foreigners, our successors: "Listen to the accents of a voice that was known to you; ye will put an end to all this talk."

Be, then, a Shakspeare or a Bossuet, that, as a last result, your master-piece may in the memory of a bird survive your language and the remembrance of you among men.

THERE WILL BE NO MORE UNIVERSAL LITERARY REPUTATIONS,

AND FOR WHAT REASON.

THE multiplicity and the diversity of modern languages ought to induce men tortured with the thirst of living to ask themselves this sad question: Can there now be in literature universal reputations such as those which have come down to us from antiquity?

In the ancient civilised world two languages predominated; two nations passed judgment, alone and without appeal, on the monuments of their genius. Victorious over the Greeks, Rome paid the same respect to the works of the intelligence of the vanquished as Alexander and Athens had done. The fame of Homer and Virgil was religiously transmitted to us by the monks, the priests, and the clergy, the teachers of the Barbarians in the ecclesiastical schools, the monasteries, the seminaries, and the universities. An hereditary admi-

ration descended to us from race to race, in virtue of the lessons of a professorship, the chair of which, vacant for fourteen centuries past, has incessantly confirmed the same judgment.

This is no longer the case in the modern civilised world, in which five languages now flourish: each of these five languages possesses master-pieces, which are not acknowledged as such in the countries where the four other languages are spoken. In this there is nothing surprising.

In living literature no person is a competent judge but of works written in his own language. In vain you imagine yourself to be complete master of a foreign idiom; you lack the nurse's milk, as well as the first words that she teaches you at the breast and in your swaddling clothes: certain accents belong exclusively to the country. The English and the Germans have the most absurd notions of our writers; they adore what we despise; they despise what we adore: they understand neither Racine nor La Fontaine, nor even Molière completely. It is laughable to know which are our great writers in London, Vienna, Berlin, Petersburg, Munich, Leipzig, Göttingen, Cologne; to know what people there read with enthusiasm, and what they do not read. I have expressed my opinion concerning a number of English writers: it is very possible that I may be mistaken, that my

admiration and my censure may be equally misplaced, that my conclusions may appear impertinent and ridiculous on the other side of the Channel.

When the merit of an author consists especially in his style, a foreigner never can properly comprehend that merit. The more talent is innate, individual, national, the more its mysteries escape the understanding which is not, if I may use the expression, *compatriot* with that talent. We admire upon parole the Greeks and the Romans; our admiration comes to us from tradition, and the Greeks and the Romans are not there to laugh at the judgments of us, Barbarians. Which of us can conceive any idea of the harmony of the prose of Demosthenes and Cicero, of the cadence of the verse of Alcæus and Horace, such as they were seized by a Greek and Latin ear! It is asserted that real beauties are of all times, of all countries: the beauties of sentiment and thought assuredly are; the beauties of style are not. Style is not, like thought, cosmopolite; it has a native land, a sky, a sun, of its own.

The nations of the North, writing all languages, have no style in those languages. The various vocabularies which encumber the memory render the perceptions confused: when the idea occurs to you, you know not in what veil to wrap it, what

idiom to employ in order to express it best. Had you known only your own language and the Greek and Latin glossaries from which it is derived, this idea would have presented itself to you clothed in its natural form: your brain not having *thought* it at once in different languages, it would not have been a multiplex abortion, the undigested produce of simultaneous conceptions; it would have had that character of unity and simplicity, that type of paternity and race, without which works of the understanding are but nebulous masses, resembling everything and nothing. The way to be a bad writer is to whistle to the echo of memory, like a parrot, several dialects: a polyglot mind charms scarcely any but the deaf and dumb. It is very well, very useful, to study, to read, the living languages, when you devote yourself to literature, extremely dangerous to speak them, but most dangerous of all to write them.

Thus henceforward there will arise no more of those colossal reputations, whose greatness is alike acknowledged by nations and ages. In respect to the moderns, therefore, the reader must take in a limited sense what I have said above of those mother-geniuses, which seem to have brought forth and suckled all the others: this remains true as to the *fact*, not as to a *universal reputation*. In Vienna, in Petersburg, in Berlin, in London, in

Lisbon, in Madrid, in Rome, in Paris we shall never have, of a German, an English, a Portuguese, a Spanish, an Italian, a French poet, one and the same idea that we form of Virgil and Homer. We modern great men count upon filling the world with our renown, but, do what we may, it will scarcely pass the limits where our language expires. Is not then the time of supreme dominations past? Are not all aristocracies finished? Do not the useless efforts that have recently been made to discover new forms, to find out new numbers, a new cesura, to refresh the colour, to make young the turn, the word, the idea, in order to make old the phrase, to return to the natural and the popular, seem to prove that we have travelled all round the circle! Instead of advancing, we have retrograded; without perceiving that we were returning to the first lispings of the tongue, to the nursery tales, to the infancy of the art. To maintain that there is no art, that there is no ideal, that we ought not to select, but to paint everything; that the deformed is as fine in its way as the beautiful—is merely a *jeu d'esprit* in these, a depravity of taste in those, a sophism of indolence in some, of impotence in others.

OTHER CAUSES WHICH TEND TO DESTROY UNIVERSAL REPUTATION.

LASTLY, besides that division of languages which is hostile to universal reputations among the moderns, another cause is labouring to destroy them: liberty, the spirit of levelling and incredulity, hatred of superiority, anarchy of ideas, democracy, in short, has penetrated into literature as well as into the rest of society. Now these things, favouring the passion of self-love and the feeling of envy, act in the sphere of letters with double force. We no longer acknowledge masters and authorities; we no longer admit rules; we no longer adopt ready-made opinions; free examination is received at Parnassus, as it is in politics and religion, as a consequence of the progress of the age. Every one judges, and thinks that he has a right to judge, according to his capacity, his taste, his system, his hatred, or his love. Hence a host of immortals, celebrated in their own street, en-

closed by the circle of their own school and of their own friends, but who are unknown or hissed in the next district.

Truth formerly had great difficulty to spread itself; it lacked a vehicle; the daily and free press was not then in existence; the literati formed a separate world; their estimate of each other was scarcely known to the public. Now, that assailing or admiring, journals sound the charge or victory, a person must be very unlucky not to know during his life-time his precise value. With these contradictory sentences, if our glory commences sooner, it also finishes sooner; in the morning an eagle, at night a bittern.

Such is human nature, particularly in France: if we possess any talents, we take the greatest pains to depreciate them. After raising them to the pinnacle, we roll them in the mud; we then recover our former position, and then degrade ourselves afresh. Who has not for a few years past seen opinions change twenty times concerning the same name? Is there then at present any thing certain and true upon earth? We know not what to believe: we hesitate about every thing, we doubt every thing; the strongest convictions in the morning are extinguished before night. We cannot endure reputations; all admiration seems to be a robbery of us; our vanities take umbrage

at the least success, and if it lasts any time, they are on the rack. We are right glad, at the bottom of our hearts, when a man of merit happens to die; it is one rival the fewer: the provoking noise made about him prevented our hearing that of the fools and the croaking concert of mediocrities. We hasten to pack up the celebrated defunct in two or three newspaper articles; we then cease to mention him; we never more open his works; we solder up his fame in his books as we do his body in his coffin, despatching the whole to eternity through the medium of time and death.

Now-a-days, every thing grows old in a few hours: a reputation fades, a work passes away in a moment. Poetry has the same fate as music: its voice, fresh at dawn, is harsh at sunset. Every one writes; nobody reads seriously. A name uttered three times annoys one. Where are those illustrious men, who on awaking one morning, a few years since, declared that nothing had existed before them; that they had discovered unknown heavens and an unknown earth; that they had determined by their genius to cover with contempt the pretended master-pieces till then so stupidly admired? Those who styled themselves *Young France* in 1830, where are they? Behold, here come the great men of 1835, who look upon these elders of 1830 as writers of merit in their day,

but now worn out, superannuated, obsolete. The sucklings will soon get into the arms of their nurse: they will laugh at the octogenarians of sixteen, at those ten thousand poets, at those fifty thousand prose-writers, who are now covering themselves with glory and melancholy, in every nook and corner of France. If by chance you do not perceive that such writers exist, they leave no means untried to attract the public notice. Another chimera! Even their last sigh passes unheard. What causes this delirium and these ravages? The absence of that counterpoise to human follies—Religion.

At the period in which we live, each lustrum is equivalent to a century; society dies and is renewed every ten years. Farewell then to all long *universally* acknowledged glory. Whoever writes in the hope of a name sacrifices his life to the most silly as to the most vain of chimeras. Bonaparte will be the last marked existence of this ancient world which is passing away: nothing will again rise above the dead level of societies, the greatness of the individual will henceforth be merged in the greatness of the species.

Youth is all that is most beautiful and most generous; I feel myself powerfully drawn towards it, as to the source of my ancient life; I wish it success and prosperity: for this reason

I make a point of not flattering it. In the false tracks in which it is straying, it will find as a final result nought but disappointment and disgust. I know that at the present day it lacks a career to pursue, that it is struggling amidst an obscure society; hence those brilliant coruscations of talent, which suddenly break through the darkness, and expire: but long and laborious studies, prosecuted in solitude and silence, would well employ the time, and would be more worth than a multitude of verses too rapidly composed, too soon forgotten.

I cannot conclude this chapter without being assailed by remorse and doubts — remorse, for having ventured to assert that Dante, Shakspeare, Tasso, Camoens, Schiller, Milton, Racine, Bossuet, Corneille, and some others, cannot live *universally* like Virgil and Homer; doubts for having thought that the time for *universal* individualities is past.

Why should I strive to deprive man of the feeling of infinity, without which he would accomplish nothing, and never reach the height that he is capable of attaining! If I find not in myself the faculty of existing, why should not my neighbours find it in themselves? Has not a little dissatisfaction with my own nature caused me to judge in too absolute a manner of the possible faculties of others? Well then, let us restore every

thing to its first state: let us give back to the talents born or to be born the hope of a glorious perpetuity, which some writers of the present day, male and female, may justly cherish: let them advance then to *universal* fame; I shall be delighted. Left behind on the road, I shall not complain, and above all, I shall have nothing to regret:

Si post fata venit gloria, non propero.

WILLIAM AND MARY. QUEEN ANNE.

CLASSIC SCHOOL.

THE invasion of French taste, begun in the reign of Charles II., was completed under William and Queen Anne. The great aristocracy, which was raising itself up, assumed the noble and imposing character of the great monarchy, its neighbour and its rival. English literature, till then almost unknown in France, crossed the Strait. Addison saw Boileau in 1701, and presented him with a copy of his Latin poems. Voltaire, obliged to seek refuge in England, on account of his quarrel with the Chevalier de Rohan-Chabot, dedicated the "Henriade" to Queen Anne, and spoiled his genius by the philosophic ideas of Collins, Chubb, Tindal, Wolston, Toland, and Bolingbroke. He made us acquainted with Shakspeare, Milton, Dryden, Shaftesbury, Swift, and exhibited them to France as men of a new species, discovered by him

in a new world. Racine the younger translated "Paradise Lost," and Rollin took notice of that poem in his "Traité des Etudes."

On the accession of William III. to the British crown, the writers of London and Paris enlisted themselves in the quarrel of princes and warriors. Boileau celebrated the *Passage of the Rhine*; Prior replies that the sovereign of Parnassus employs the nine muses *to sing that Louis has not passed the Rhine*—which was the truth. Philips translated Corneille's "Pompée," and Roscommon wrote the prologue to it. Addison celebrated the victories of Marlborough, and paid homage to "Athalie;" Pope published his "Essay on Criticism," for which "L'Art Poetique" furnished the model. He gives nearly the same rules as Horace and Boileau, but all at once, recollecting his dignity, he proudly exclaims:

"But we, brave Britons, foreign laws despise."

The French poet's "L'Art Poetique," was translated; Dryden revised the text, and merely substituted the names of English writers in place of those of French writers. He renders the "hatez-vous lentement," *gently make haste.*

"The Rape of the Lock" was suggested by "Le Lutrin," and the "Dunciad" is an imitation of the Satires by the friend of Racine. Butler translated one of these satires.

The literary age of Queen Anne is a last reflection of the age of Louis XIV. And as if the great king had been destined to encounter William incessantly and to make conquests, when he could no longer invade England with his men at arms, he penetrated into it with his men of letters: the genius of Albion, which our soldiers could not subdue, yielded to our poets.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

ADDISON. POPE. SWIFT. STEELE.

ANOTHER revolution, the consequences of which have been and still continue to be incalculable, now took place. The periodical press, at once political and literary, was established on the banks of the Thames. Steele wrote, on whig principles, the Tatler, the Spectator, the Mentor, the Englishman, the Lover, the Reader, the Town-talk, the Chit-chat, the Plebeian; he attacked the Examiner, written by Swift, in the tory spirit. Addison, Congreve, Walsh, Arbuthnot, Gay, Pope, King, ranged themselves according to their respective opinions, under the banners of Swift and Steele.

Jonathan Swift, born in Ireland, on the 30th of November, 1667, has been most inappropriately called by Voltaire the English Rabelais. Voltaire relished only the impieties of Rabelais, and his humour, when it is good; but the deep satire on

society and man, the lofty philosophy, the grand style of the *curé* of Meudon, escaped his notice, as he saw only the weak side of Christianity, and had no idea of the intellectual and moral revolution effected in mankind by the Gospel.

The "Tale of a Tub," in which the Pope, Luther, and Calvin are attacked, and "Gulliver," in which social institutions are stigmatised, exhibit but faint copies of "Gargantua." The ages in which the two writers lived produce, moreover, a wide difference between them: Rabelais began his language; Swift finished his. It is not certain, however, that the "Tale of a Tub" is Swift's, or that it was written entirely by him; Swift amused himself by manufacturing verses of twenty, thirty, and sixty feet. Velly, the historian, has translated the satire on the peace of Utrecht, entitled "John Bull."

William III., who did so many things, taught Swift the art of growing asparagus in the Dutch manner. Jonathan fell in love with Stella, took her to his deanery of St. Patrick, and at the end of sixteen years, when he was at the end of his passion, he married her. Esther van Homrigh conceived an affection for Swift, though he was old, ugly, and disgusting: when she learned that he was absolutely married to Stella, who had become quite indifferent to him, she died; Stella

soon followed Esther. The hard-hearted man, who caused the death of these two beautiful young women, was not able, like the truly great poets, to bestow on them a second life.

Steele, a countryman of Swift's, became his rival in politics. Having obtained a seat in the House of Commons, he was expelled from it as the author of seditious libels. On the creation of twelve peers, during the administration of Oxford and Bolingbroke, he addressed a cutting letter to Sir Miles Wharton, on the making of peers for particular occasions. Steele did not enrich himself by his connexion with the great corrupter Walpole: relinquishing his pamphlets, he turned his attention to mechanical literature, and invented a machine for conveying salmon fresh to London.

Steele has been deservedly commended for having cleansed the drama of those obscenities with which the writers of the time of Charles II. had infected it: this was so much the more meritorious in the author of the "Conscious Lovers," inasmuch as his own manners were far from regular. Meanwhile, his contemporary, Gay, the fabulist, brought upon the stage his "Beggars' Opera," the hero of which is a robber and the heroine a prostitute. The "Beggars' Opera," is the original of our melo-dramas of the present day.

TRANSITION FROM CLASSIC LITERATURE TO DIDACTIC, DESCRIPTIVE, AND SENTIMENTAL LITERATURE.

POEMS OF DIFFERENT WRITERS.

ENGLISH classic literature, which resembled ours as nearly as the difference of national manners would permit, degenerated rapidly, and passed from the Classic to the Spirit of the eighteenth century. We then became in our turn imitators: we fell to work to copy our neighbours, with an eagerness which still seizes us by fits. Here the subject is so well known and so completely exhausted, that it would be tiresome to proceed in chronological order, and to repeat what every body is acquainted with.

Moral, technical, didactic, descriptive poetry includes the names of Gay, Young, Akenside, Goldsmith, Gray, Bloomfield, Glover, Thomson, &c.; the novel boasts of Richardson and Fielding;

history of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, who have been followed by Smollett and Lingard.

Besides all these poets, there were read in their day "The Art of Preserving Health," by Armstrong, "The Chase," by Somerville, "The Actor," by Lloyd, "The Art of Poetry," by Roscommon, "The Art of Poetry," by Francis, "The Art of Politics," by Bramston, "The Art of Cookery," by King.

"The Art of Politics" possesses spirit. The exordium of these different poems is imitated from the opening of the *Ars Poetica* of Horace. Bramston compares a man at once Whig and Tory to a human figure with

> "—— a lady's bosom and a tail of cod."

Delacourt in his "Prospect of Poetry" aimed at that imitative technical harmony, which has since been cultivated in France by M. Piis.

> RRs jar untuneful o'er the quiv'ring tongue,
> And serpent S with hissings spoils the song.

Akenside's "Pleasures of Imagination," is deficient in imagination; and Stillingfleet's poem on "Conversation," could only have been composed among a people who knew not how to converse.

I ought further to mention "The Shipwreck," by Falconer; "The Traveller," and "The De-

serted Village," by Goldsmith; "The Creation," by Blackmore, and "The Judgment of Hercules," by Shenstone.

Let me also name Dyer and Denham. "The Poet's Complaint," by the unfortunate Otway, is worth reading, as is also "The Wanderer," by the still more unfortunate Savage, who has there painted in a striking manner the fury of Suicide:

A fiend in evil moments ever nigh
Death in her hand and frenzy in her eye!
Her eye all red and sunk! a robe she wore
With life's calamities all broider'd o'er.
* * * * *
She muses o'er her woe-embroider'd vest
And self-abhorrence heightens in her breast.
To shun her care the force of sleep she tries,
Still wakes her mind, though slumbers doze her eyes.
She dreams, starts, rises, stalks from place to place
With restless, thoughtful, interrupted pace,
Now eyes the sun and curses ev'ry ray,
Now the green ground where colour fades away,
Dim spectres dance! Again her eye she rears;
Then from the blood-shot ball wipes purpled tears;
Then presses hard her brow, with mischief fraught,
Her brow half bursts with agony of thought;
From me, she cries, pale wretch, thy comfort claim,
Born of Despair, and Suicide my name!

YOUNG.

YOUNG has founded a bad school, and was not himself a good master. He owed part of his early reputation to the picture presented in the opening of his "Night Thoughts." A minister of the Most High, an aged father, who has lost his only daughter, awakes in the middle of the night to mourn upon graves; with Death, Time, and Eternity, he associates the only great thing that man has within himself—grief. This is a striking picture.

But draw nearer; when the imagination, roused by the exordium of the poet, has already created a world of sorrows and of reveries, you find nothing of what you have been promised. You find a man racking his brains for tender and melancholy ideas, and who arrives only at a morose philosophy. Young, whom the phantom of the world pursues, even among the tombs, betrays, in his declamations on death, merely a disappointed ambition: he takes his peevishness for melan-

choly. There is nothing natural in his tenderness, nothing ideal in his grief: it is always a heavy hand moving slowly over the lyre.

Young strove to give to his meditations the character of sorrow: that character is derived from three sources—the scenes of nature, the crowd of recollections, the thoughts of religion.

As for the scenes of nature, Young has endeavoured to make them subservient to his complaints: he apostrophises the moon, he addresses the stars, and the reader remains unmoved. I cannot tell where lies that melancholy which a poet draws forth from pictures of nature: it is hidden in deserts; it is the Echo of fable, pining away with grief, and dwelling invisible upon the mountains.

Such of our good writers as were acquainted with the charm of reverie have surpassed the English divine. Chaulieu has, like Horace, mingled the thoughts of death with the illusions of life.

Grotte, d'où sort ce clair ruisseau,
De mousse et de fleurs tapissé,
N'entretiens jamais ma pensée
Que du murmure de ton eau.
* * * *
Muses, qui dans ce lieu champêtre
Avec soin me fîtes nourrir;
Beaux arbres, qui m'avez vu naître,
Bientôt vous me verrez mourir.

The most pensive page of Young's is not to be compared with this page of Rousseau's:

"When evening approached, I descended from the heights of the island, and loved to sit down on the margin of the lake, in some sequestered spot: there, the noise of the waves and the agitation of the water, engaging my senses and driving from my soul all other agitation, plunged it into a delicious reverie, in which night frequently stole upon me without my being aware of it. The flux and reflux of this water, its continuous noise, but swelling at intervals, striking incessantly my ear and my eye, supplied the place of those inward movements which reverie extinguished within me, and sufficed to make me feel with pleasure my existence, without taking the trouble to think. From time to time, there arose some faint and brief reflection on the instability of the things of this world, an image of which was presented to me by the surface of the waters; but these slight impressions were presently effaced in the uniformity of the continuous movement which rocked me, and which, without any active concurrence of my soul, did not fail to attach me to such a degree, that, when called at the hour and by the signal agreed upon, I could not tear myself from it without great reluctance."

Young has not turned to good account the reveries which such scenes inspire, because his genius was deficient in tenderness.

As for the recollections of misfortune, they are numerous in this poet, but without truth, like the rest. They have nothing of these strains of Gilbert's, expiring in the flower of his age in an hospital, and forsaken by his friends:—

Au banquet de la vie, infortuné convive,
J'apparus un jour, et je meurs!
Je meurs, et sur ma tombe où lentement j'arrive,
Nul ne viendra verser des pleurs.

Adieu, champs fortunés, adieu, douce verdure,
Adieu, riant exil des bois;
Ciel, pavillon de l'homme, admirable nature,
Adieu, pour la dernière fois!

Ah! puissent voir long-temps votre beauté sacrée,
Tant d'amis sourds à mes adieux!
Qu'ils meurent pleins de jours, que leur mort soit pleurée,
Qu'un ami leur ferme les yeux!

Young declaims in several places against solitude: the tone of his heart, therefore, was neither that of the priest nor that of the poet. The saints sought food for their meditations in the desert, and Parnassus also is a solitary hill. Bourdaloue entreated the chief of his order to permit him to retire from the world. "I feel," he wrote, "that my body is declining and hastening to its end. I

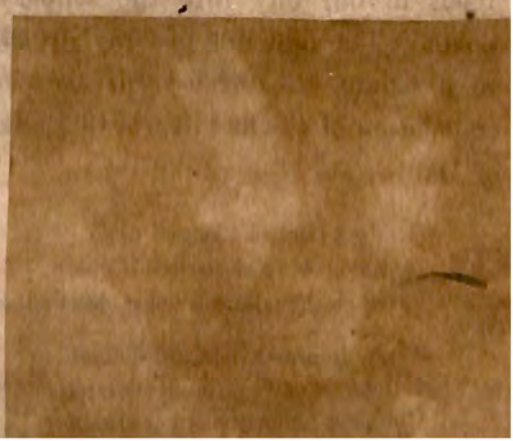
have finished my course, and would to God that I could add, I have been faithful! . . . . Let me be permitted to devote the remnant of my life entirely to God, and to myself . . . . . There, forgetting all the things of this world, I shall pass in the presence of God all the years of my life in the bitterness of my soul." If Bossuet, living amidst the pomp of Versailles, has, nevertheless, diffused over his works a holy and majestic melancholy, it is because he had found in religion a complete solitude.

Moreover, in this descriptive elegiac class of compositions, our age has surpassed that which preceded it. It is not, as formerly, vague descriptions, but precise observations that harmonise with the feelings, that charm by their truth, and, as it were, leave a sort of plaintiveness in the soul.

It is the nature of man to regret what he has lost, to dwell amidst recollections, to seek to be alone, as he approaches the grave. Images borrowed from nature have a thousand resemblances to our fortunes: this man passes on in silence, like a gushing spring; that makes a noise in his course, like a torrent; the other precipitates his life, like a cataract; it affrights, and disappears.

Young mourns then over the ashes of Narcissa, without affecting the reader. A mother was

blind; the circumstance that her daughter was at the point of death had been concealed from her: she was not aware of her misfortune till she embraced her child, and found upon her maternal lips the sacred oil with which the priest had touched the virgin brow. Here is a subject which moves the heart more than all the "Night Thoughts" of the father of Narcissa.'



GRAY. THOMSON. DELILLE. FONTANES.

From the author of the "Night Thoughts" I pass to the bard of the rustic dead. Gray found on his lyre a series of accords and inspirations unknown to antiquity. With him commences that school of melancholy poets, which has transformed itself in our day into the school of despairing poets. The first line of Gray's celebrated "Elegy in a Country Church-yard," is almost a literal translation of the last line of these delicious terzets of Dante's:—

Era già l'ora che volge'l disio
A' naviganti e'ntenerisce il cuore
Lo di ch' han detto a dolce amici addio.

E che lo nuovo peregrin d'amore
Punge, se ode squilla di lontana
Che paja l'giorno pianger si muore

Gray says,

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.

I too have in my time imitated the "Elegy in a Country Church-yard;" indeed, who has not?

Eh que sont les honneurs? l'enfant de la victoire,
Le paisible mortel qui conduit un troupeau,
Meurent également; et les pas de la gloire,
Comme ceux du plaisir, ne mènent qu'au tombeau.

* * * * * *

Peut-être ici la mort enchaine en son empire
De rustiques Newton de la terre ignorés,
D'illustres inconnus dont les talens sacrés
Eussent charmer les dieux sur le luth qui respire:

Ainsi brille la perle au fond des vastes mers;
Ainsi meurent aux champs des roses passagères
Qu'on ne voit point rougir, et qui, loin des bergères,
D'inutiles parfums embaument les deserts.

Gray's example proves that a writer may indulge in reverie without ceasing to be noble and natural, and without despising harmony.

His "Ode on a Distant View of Eton College" is worthy, in some of the stanzas, of the "Elegy in a Country Church-yard."

Ah happy hills! ah pleasing shade!
Ah fields belov'd in vain!
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from you blow
A momentary bliss bestow,

As, waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe
And redolent of joy and youth
To breathe a second spring.

Say, father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace;
Who foremost now delight to cleave,
With pliant arms, thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthrall?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

* * * *

Alas, regardless of their doom
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
No care beyond to-day.

Who has not felt the sentiments and the regrets expressed here with all the sweetness of the Muse? Who has not been affected at the remembrances of the sports, the studies, the loves, of his early years! But can we recal them to life? The pleasures of youth re-produced by memory are ruins viewed by torch-light.

Gray was ambitious to be thought gentlemanlike; he could not bear to hear any one talk of his poetry, of which he was ashamed. He prided himself on being deeply versed in history, and so he really was; he turned his attention also to the

natural sciences, and had pretensions to chemistry; as Sir Humphrey Davy lately aspired, but with reason, to poetical renown. Where are the gentlemanlikeness, the history, and the chemistry of Gray? He lives only in a melancholy smile of those Muses whom he despised.

Thomson has expressed, like Gray, but in a different manner, his regrets for the days of childhood.

> Welcome kindred glooms!
> Congenial horrors, hail! With frequent foot,
> Pleas'd have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
> When, nurs'd by careless solitude, I liv'd,
> And sung of nature with unceasing joy,
> Pleas'd have I wander'd through your rough domain,
> Trod the pure virgin snows, myself as pure.

As the English had their Thomson, so we have our St. Lambert and our Delille. The masterpiece of the latter is his version of the Georgics—with the exception perhaps of some of his sentimental poems—but it is as if you were reading Racine translated into the language of Louis XV. There are pictures of Raphael's copied by Mignard; such are the pictures of Virgil imitated by the Abbé Delille.

His "Jardins" is a charming work. A bolder style is observable in some of the cantos of his translation of "Paradise Lost." Be this as it may, the technical school, placed between the Classic

school of the seventeenth and the Romantic school of the nineteenth century, is finished: its studied boldnesses, its labours to ennoble things that are not worth the trouble, to imitate sounds and objects which it is useless to imitate, have given to the Technical school but a factitious life, that has passed away with the factitious manners from which it sprang. This school, without lacking the natural, lacks nature: occupied with puerile arrangements of words, it is neither sufficiently original as a new school, nor sufficiently pure as an ancient school. The Abbé Delille was the poet of modern mansions as the troubadour was the poet of the ancient castles: the verses of the one, the ballads of the other, make you feel the difference between aristocracy in the vigour of age and aristocracy in decrepitude: the Abbé describes readings and games at chess in the halls where the troubadour sang of the crusades and of tournaments.

The prose and the verse of M. de Fontanes are like one another, and possess a merit of the same nature. His thoughts and his images have a melancholy unknown to the age of Louis XIV., which was acquainted only with the austere and holy sadness of religious eloquence. This melancholy is found to pervade the works of the author of "Le Jour des Morts," as the impress of the period in which he lived: it shows that he was born since

Rousseau, not immediately after Fénélon. If the works of M. de Fontanes were reduced to two small volumes, one of prose, the other poetry, it would be the most elegant funeral monument that could be erected over the grave of the Classic school.

Among the posthumous Odes of M. de Fontanes, there is one on the anniversary of his birth; it possesses the charm of the "Jour des Morts," with a more penetrating and more individual sentiment. I recollect only these two stanzas:—

La vieillesse déja vient avec ses souffrances.
Que m'offre l'avenir? De courtes esperances.
Que m'offre le passé? Des fautes, des regrets.
Tel est le sort de l'homme; il s'instruit avec l'âge:
Mais que sert d'être sage,
Quand le terme est si près?

Le passé, le present, l'avenir, tout m'afflige;
La vie à son déclin est pour moi sans prestige;
Dans le miroir du temps elle perd ses appas.
Plaisirs! allez chercher l'amour et la jeunesse;
Laissez-moi ma tristesse,
Et ne l'insultez pas!

If anything in the world ought to have excited antipathy in M. de Fontanes, it was my way of writing. In me commenced, with the school called Romantic, a revolution in French literature: yet my friend, instead of being disgusted at my barbarism, was a passionate admirer of it. I certainly did observe astonishment in his countenance

when I read to him fragments from the Natchez, Atala, and Réné; he could not make those productions square with the common rules of criticism; but he felt that he was entering a new world; he beheld a new nature; he understood a language which he did not speak. He gave me excellent advice; to him I am indebted for whatever correctness there is in my style; he taught me to regard the ear; he prevented me from falling into the extravagance of invention and the roughness of execution of my disciples, if, however, I have any disciples.

The 18th of Fructidor drove M. de Fontanes to London. We frequently took walks into the country: we stopped beneath some of those large elm-trees which are scattered over the fields. Reclining against the trunk of one of these elms, my friend gave me an account of his former visit to England before the revolution; he recited the lines which he had then addressed to two young ladies, who had grown old beneath the towers of Westminster Abbey—towers which he found standing just as he left them, whilst at their foot were buried the illusions and the hours of youth. We dined at some solitary tavern at Chelsea, on the Thames, talking of Shakspeare and of Milton, who,

au pied de Westminster,
Et devinait Cromwell et rêvait Lucifer *.

* "Les Conversations," by Sainte Beuve.

Milton and Shakspeare had seen what my friend and I saw: they had sat like us on the margin of that river, to us the foreign river of Babylon, to them the nourishing river of their country. We returned at night to London by the glimmering rays of the stars, which were lost one after another in the fog of the city, We regained our dwelling guided by uncertain lights which scarcely showed us the way, amidst the coal smoke reddening around every lamp. Thus passes the life of the poet.

RE-ACTION.—LITERARY TRANSFORMATION.—HISTORIANS.

WHEN we became enthusiastic imitators of our neighbours, when every thing was English in France—dress, dogs, horses, gardens, books—the English, from their instinctive hatred of us, became anti-French; the more we strove to approach them the more they kept aloof from us. Exposed to the public derision on their stage, there was to be seen in all John Bull's parodies a meagre Frenchman, in an apple-green taffeta suit, his hat under his arm, with spindle-shanks, long queue, and the air of a famished dancing-master or hair-dresser; he suffered his nose to be pulled, and he ate frogs. An Englishman on our stage was always a lord or a captain, a hero of sentiment and generosity. The re-action in London extended to the entire literature; the French school was attacked. Sometimes striving to re-produce the past, at others attempting unknown routes, our neighbours, proceeding from

innovation to innovation, arrived at the modern English school.

When, in 1792, I took refuge in England, I found it necessary to reform most of the opinions which I had borrowed from the criticisms of Voltaire, Diderot, La Harpe, and Fontanes.

As for the historians, Hume was reputed a Tory Jacobite writer, heavy and *retrograde;* he was accused, as well as Gibbon, of having overloaded the English language with Gallicisms; his continuator Smollett, of whig and *progressive* principles, was preferred to him. Gibbon was just dead; he passed for a rhetorician: a philosopher during his life, having become a Christian at his death, he was as such charged and convicted of being a weak man; Hallam and Lingard had not yet appeared.

People still talked of Robertson, because he was dry; one cannot say of the reading of his history what M. Lerminier says of the reading of the history of Herodotus at the Olympic Games: "Greece trembled and Thucydides wept." The learned Scottish divine would have tried in vain to match that speech which Thucydides puts into the lips of the Platæans, pleading their cause before the Lacedæmonians, who condemned them to death because they had continued faithful to the Athenians.

"Turn your eyes to the graves of your fathers slaughtered by the Medes, and buried in our furrows; to them we every year pay public honours, as to our old companions in arms. Pausanias buried them there, conceiving that he was depositing them in hospitable earth. If ye take away our lives; if ye make the field of Platæa a field of Thebes; will it not be abandoning your kindred in an enemy's country and leaving them among their murderers? Will you not be enslaving the soil on which the Greeks conquered their freedom? Will you not be abolishing the ancient sacrifices of the founders of these temples? We become supplicants to the ashes of your ancestors; we implore those dead that we may not be enslaved to the Thebans. We will remind you of the day when the most glorious deeds shed a lustre over us, and we conclude this address—a necessary and terrible conclusion, for it may perhaps be but to die that we shall cease to speak."

Have we amidst our fields graves where we every year perform libations? Have we temples which remind us of memorable deeds? The Grecian history is a poem, Latin history a picture, modern history a chronicle.

LITERARY TRANSFORMATION.

(CONTINUED.)

PHILOSOPHERS—POETS—POLITICAL ECONOMISTS.

From 1792 to 1800, I seldom heard Locke mentioned in England: his system, it was said, had become obsolete, and he was regarded as weak in *ideology*. With respect to Newton, as a writer, they would not have him upon earth, and sent him off to heaven, which was perfectly just.

> Il vint; il revela le principe suprême,
> Constant, universel, un comme Dieu lui-même:
> L'univers se taisait; il dit—*Attraction!*
> Ce mot, c'etait le mot de la création *.

As for the poets, the "Elegant Extracts" afforded an asylum to a few pieces of Dryden's. People could not forgive the rhymed verses of Pope, though they went to see his house at Twickenham, and cut pieces from the weeping willow which he planted, but which has died away like his fame.

* Contemplation. A mon père. J. J. Ampere.

Blair? A tiresome critic, in the French style: he was placed far below Johnson.

The old Spectator? To the garret.

Philosophic literature? Confined to the classes at Edinburgh.

The works of the English political writers possess little general interest. General questions are there seldom touched upon; those works scarcely ever discuss any but truths peculiar to the constitution of the British islands.

The productions of the economists are less circumscribed. The calculations respecting the wealth of nations, the influence of colonies, the movement of generations, the employment of capital, the balance of trade and agriculture, apply in part to the different European societies.

However, at the period of which I am treating, Burke had overstepped the circle of national political individuality. By declaring against the French Revolution, he hurried his country into that long series of hostilities which terminated on the field of Waterloo. Cut off from the rest of the world for twenty-two years, England defended her constitution against the ideas which are at this day overpowering it, and dragging it to the common fate of ancient civilisation.

THE STAGE.—MRS. SIDDONS.—THE PIT.

INVASION OF GERMAN LITERATURE.

It was nevertheless ungrateful thus to slight the Classics. People had gone back to Shakspeare and Milton. Well—the writers of the age of Queen Anne had restored to the light those two poets, who waited fifty years in limbo for the moment of their entrance into glory. Dryden, Pope, and Addison were the promoters of the apotheosis. Thus Voltaire has contributed to the illustration of the great men of the reign of Louis XIV.: that versatile, prying, inquisitive genius, possessing abundance of fame, lent a little to his neighbour, on condition that it should be repaid to him with heavy interest.

During the eight years of my emigration in London, I saw Shakspeare rule the stage; Rowe, Congreve, Otway, scarcely made their appearance upon it. That sublime and unequal painter of the passions scarcely suffered any other to place

himself beside him. Mrs. Siddons, in the part of Lady Macbeth, performed with extraordinary grandeur: the scene where she walks in her sleep thrilled the spectator with horror. Talma alone was on a level with that actress; but his talent possessed somewhat of the Greek correctness, which was not to be found in that of Mrs. Siddons.

In 1822, being invited to a party at Lord Lansdowne's, his lordship introduced me to an austere-looking lady of seventy-three. She was dressed in crape, wore a black veil like a diadem over her white hair, and looked like an abdicated queen. She addressed me in a solemn tone and three mutilated sentences of the "Génie du Christianisme;" she then said with not less solemnity, "I am Mrs. Siddons." Had she said, "I am Lady Macbeth," I should have believed her. One needs but live to meet with the wrecks of one age cast by the waves of Time on the shore of another age.

The English pit was, in my days of exile, noisy and coarse. Sailors drank beer in the pit, ate oranges, apostrophised the boxes. I happened one evening to be next to a sailor who had come into the house drunk. He asked me where he was. I told him in Covent Garden. "A pretty garden, indeed!" he exclaimed, seized like Homer's gods with inextinguishable laughter. But John Bull,

in his brutality, was a better judge of the beauties of Shakspeare than those dandies of the present day, who prefer the plays of Kotzebue and of our Boulevards, translated into English, to the scenes of Richard III. and Hamlet.

German literature has invaded English literature, as formerly Italian literature, and afterwards French literature, made an irruption into the native land of Milton. Walter Scott commenced his literary career with a translation of Göthe's "Götz of Berlichingen." Kotzebue's dramas then profaned the stage of Shakspeare: a different choice might have been made, since there were Göthe, and Schiller, and Lessing. Some Scottish poets have done better to imitate in their courage and in their mountains, those martial strains of new Germany with which St. Marc Girardin has made us acquainted, as Ampère has initiated us in the Edda, the Sagas, and the Nibelungen Lied.

The following piece was written by Körner on Rauch's bust of Queen Louisa of Prussia:

Thou sleep'st so soft—still, life's fair visions over,
Each tranquil feature breathes once more in seeming,
Thy clear mild eyes, just closed in peaceful dreaming,
With scarcely folded wings light slumbers cover;
Thus slumber on till thy land's sons, redeeming
God's favour, gladly give life to recover
Their freedom—when upon each bright hill hover

The beacons: and their rusted swords are gleaming
Through night and death deep the Land's hosts are driven,
Thus, through hard fight alone the boon is given
That our sons freemen live in earth and heaven!
When thy land calls on thee just vengeance taking;
Rise, German Wife! when Freedom's morn is breaking—
For the good cause a guardian angel waking! *

* From "The Lyre and Sword," being translations of Körner's Poems, by W. B. Chorley.—TRANSLATOR.

LITERARY TRANSFORMATION.

(CONTINUED.)

POLITICAL ELOQUENCE. FOX. BURKE. PITT.

POLITICAL eloquence may be considered as constituting part of British Literature. I have had opportunities of forming my opinion upon it at two very different periods of my life.*

The England of 1688 was, about the end of the last century, at the apogee of its glory. As a poor emigrant in London from 1792 to 1800, I listened to the speeches of the Pitts, the Foxes, the Sheridans, the Wilberforces, the Grenvilles, the Whitbreads, the Lauderdales, the Erskines: as a magnificent ambassador in 1822, I cannot express how I was struck when, instead of the great speakers whom I had formerly admired, I saw those who had been their seconds at the time of my first visit, the scholars, rise instead of the

* All that follows, as far as the chapter entitled "Travels," is extracted from my Memoirs.

masters. Britain fares no better than the rest; *general* ideas have penetrated into that *particular* society and are leading it. But the enlightened aristocracy, placed at the head of that country for the last one hundred and forty years, will have exhibited to the world one of the most powerful societies that ever did honour to mankind since the Roman Patriciate. The last successes of the British crown on the continent have hastened its fall; victorious England, as well as Bonaparte vanquished, lost her empire at Waterloo.

In 1791 I was present at the memorable sitting of the House of Commons, when Burke renounced his political connection with Fox. The question related to the French revolution, which Burke attacked, and Fox defended. Never did the two speakers, who had till then been friends, display such eloquence. The whole house was affected, and tears trickled down Fox's cheeks when Burke concluded his reply in these words:—

"The right honourable gentleman, in the speech which he has just made, has treated me in every sentence with uncommon harshness. He has brought down the whole strength and heavy artillery of his judgment, eloquence, and abilities upon me, to crush me at once by a censure upon my whole life, conduct, and opinions. Notwithstanding this great and serious, though on my part

unmerited, attack and attempt to crush me, I will not be dismayed. I am not yet afraid to state my sentiments in this house or any where else, and I will tell all the world that the constitution is in danger. It certainly is an indiscretion at any period, but especially at my time of life, to provoke enemies, or to give my friends occasion to desert me; yet, if my firm and steady adherence to the British constitution places me in such a dilemma, I will risk all; and, as public duty and public prudence teach me, with my last words exclaim, 'Fly from the French constitution!'"

Mr. Fox here whispered "that there was no loss of friends."

"Yes," exclaimed Burke, "there is a loss of friends: I know the price of my conduct. I have done my duty at the price of my friend. Our friendship is at an end. Before I sit down, let me earnestly warn the two right honourable gentlemen who are the great rivals in this house, whether they hereafter move in the political hemisphere as two flaming meteors, or walk together like brothers hand in hand, to preserve and cherish the British constitution, to guard against innovation, and to save it from the danger of those new theories."

Pitt, Fox, and Burke are no more, and the English constitution has felt the influence of the

new theories. You should have seen the gravity of the parliamentary debates at that period; you should have heard the speakers, whose prophetic voices seemed to announce a speedy revolution; in order to form some idea of the scene to which I have just adverted. Liberty restricted within the limits of order seemed to be struggling at Westminster under the influence of that anarchical liberty which was declaiming at the still bloody tribune of the Convention.

Pitt, tall and slender, had an air at once melancholy and sarcastic. His delivery was cold, his intonation monotonous, his action scarcely perceptible; at the same time the lucidity and the fluency of his thoughts, the logic of his arguments, suddenly irradiated with flashes of eloquence, rendered his talent something above the ordinary line.

I frequently saw Pitt walking across St. James's Park, from his own house to the palace. On his part, George III. arrived from Windsor, after drinking beer out of a pewter pot with the farmers of the neighbourhood; he drove through the mean courts of his mean habitation in a grey chariot, followed by a few of the Horse Guards. This was the master of the kings of Europe, as five or six merchants of the City are the masters of India. Pitt, dressed in black, with a steel-hilted sword by his side, hat under his arm, ascended, taking two

or three steps at a time. In his passage he only met with three or four emigrants who had nothing to do: casting on us a disdainful look, he turned up his nose and his pale face, and passed on.

At home, this great financier kept no sort of order; he had no regular hours for his meals or for sleep. Over head and ears in debt, he paid nobody, and never could take the trouble to cast up a bill. A valet de chambre managed his house. Ill dressed, without pleasure, without passion, greedy of power, he despised honours, and would not be any thing more than William Pitt.

In the month of June, 1822, Lord Liverpool took me to dine at his country-house. As we crossed Putney Heath, he showed me the small house where the son of Lord Chatham, the statesman who had had Europe in his pay, and distributed with his own hand all the treasures of the world, died in poverty.

CHANGE IN ENGLISH MANNERS.

GENTLEMEN-FARMERS. CLERGY. FASHIONABLE WORLD. GEORGE III.

SEPARATED from the Continent by a long war, the English retained their manners and their national character till the end of the last century. All was not yet machine in the working classes, — folly in the upper classes. On the same pavements where you now meet squalid figures, and men in frock coats, you were passed by young girls in white tippets, straw hats tied under the chin with a riband, with a basket on the arm in which was fruit or a book; all kept their eyes cast down, all blushed when one looked at them. Frock coats, without any other, were so unusual in London, in 1793, that a woman, deploring with tears the death of Louis XVI., said to me, "But my dear sir, is it true that the poor King was dressed in a frock coat when they cut off his head?"

The gentlemen-farmers had not yet sold their patrimony to take up their residence in London; they still formed in the House of Commons that independent fraction which, transferring their support from the opposition to the ministerial side, upheld the ideas of order and propriety. They hunted the fox, and shot pheasants in autumn, ate fat goose at Michaelmas, greeted the sirloin with shouts of "Roast beef for ever!" complained of the present, extolled the past, cursed Pitt and the war, which doubled the price of port wine, and went to bed drunk, to begin the same life again on the following day. They felt quite sure that the glory of Great Britain would not perish so long as God save the King was sung, the rotten boroughs maintained, the game-laws enforced, and hares and partridges could be sold by stealth at market, by the names of lions and ostriches.

The English clergy were learned, hospitable, and generous; they had received the French clergy with a charity truly christian. The University of Oxford had a New Testament, according to the Romish reading, printed at its expense, with these words:—*For the use of the Catholic Clergy, exiled for religion*, and distributed it gratuitously among the refugees.

As for high English society, I, an insignificant exile, saw but the outside of it. At the King's levees, or those of the Princess of Wales, ladies

passed along seated aside in sedan-chairs, their hoops protruding at the door of the chair, like the fore part of an altar; they themselves, looked, upon these altars up to their waists, like madonnas or pagodas. These fair ladies were the daughters of those mothers whom the Duc de Guines and the Duke de Lauzun had adored; and these daughters were, in 1822, the mothers and grandmothers of little girls who danced at my house, in short petticoats, to the sound of Collinet's flute. It is eleven years since that time; eleven years added to the skirt of a dress must have made the steps none the lighter. And each of these little girls has now perhaps eleven little girls, the eldest eleven years old, and almost ready to be married—rapid generations of flowers!

George III. survived Mr. Pitt, but he had lost both reason and sight. Every session, at the opening of Parliament, the ministers read to the silent and affected chambers the bulletin of the King's health. The blind monarch was seen wandering about like King Lear in his palaces, groping with his hands the walls of the apartments of Windsor Castle, or seated at the piano, playing with his white hair, a sonata of Handel's or the favourite air of Shakspeare—a worthy end of Old England!*

* The extracts from the Memoirs are broken off here.

TRAVELS.

CAPTAIN ROSS. JACQUEMONT. LAMARTINE.

TRAVELS!—delightful word!—it reminds me of my whole life. The Americans are pleased to consider me as the bard of their ancient forests; and Abou Gosh, the Arab, still remembers my excursion in the mountains of Judea. I opened the door of the East to Lord Byron, and to the travellers who have since me visited the Cephisus, the Jordan, and the Nile—a numerous posterity, whom I have sent to Egypt as Jacob sent thither his sons. My old and young friends have enlarged the narrow path left by my passage. M. Michaud, the last pilgrim of his Crusades, has beheld the holy sepulchre; M. Lenormant has explored the tombs of Thebes, to preserve for us the language of Champollion; he has seen that liberty reviving amidst the ruins of Greece which I there saw expiring under the turban, intoxicated with fanaticism, opium, and women. My footsteps in every

country have been effaced by other footsteps: it is only in the dust of Carthage that they have remained solitary, like the vestiges of a son of the desert on the snows of Canada. Even in the savannahs of Atala, the herbage has given place to cultivated crops; three high-roads now lead to the Natchez, and if Chactas were still living, he might be a deputy to the congress at Washington. Nay, more—I have received a Cherokee pamphlet, in which those savages compliment me in English as an "eminent writer and conductor of the public press."

Voyages and travels ought to be included in English Literature. Many changes have taken place in the manner of writing them, from the time of Ralegh, Hudson, Baffin, Shaw, Anson, Chandler, to the latest explorers of land and sea. It would require a volume to notice the voyages of Captains Cook and Vancouver, the thousand and one tours in India, the discoveries of Mungo Park, Laing, Clapperton, and the brothers Lander, and those of Captains Parry, Franklin, and Ross. Were I to allow my fondness for voyages and travels to run away with me, I should never get away from Timbuctoo, the banks of the Niger, or the valleys of the Himalaya. Nevertheless, that I may not omit this great branch of English literature, I shall quote a few passages from the last

journal of Captain Ross. I am particularly interested in that arctic world, the discovery of which was one of the day-dreams of my youth.

Captain Ross, having left England in 1829, for the purpose of seeking a north-west passage, penetrated Lancaster Strait, and to Prince Regent's Inlet. Stopped by the ice in the gulf to which he has given the name of Boothia, he remained four years blocked up on the west coast of that gulf. Being obliged to forsake his ship, the Victory, he turned back over the surface of a frozen ocean, in quest of Baffin's Bay, where he had the good fortune to fall in with the Isabella whaler, which took him on board. By an extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, the Isabella was the same vessel in which Captain Ross had performed his first voyage in 1818.

During the four years of his detention among the ice, the captain discovered the magnetic pole, and the western polar sea, separated from the eastern sea merely by a very narrow isthmus. Let us now turn to the sufferings of the voyagers, and the kind of desolate poetry of those regions. The captain gives this description of hyperborean nature:—

"Is there any one that loves the sight of ice and snow: I imagine now that I always doubted this; I am quite sure of it at present. It deforms

all landscape, destroys all 'keeping,' by confounding distances, and with that proportions, and with that too, more and worse than all else, the harmony of colouring; giving us a motley patchwork of black and white, in place of those sweet gradations and combinations of colour which Nature produces in her summer mood, even amid the most deformed and harsh of landscapes.

"These are the objections to a snow landscape, which even the experience of a day may furnish; how much more when, for more than half a year, all the element above head is snow, when the gale is a gale of snow, the fog a fog of snow, when the sun shines but to glitter on the snow, which is, yet does not fall, when the breath of the mouth is snow, when snow settles on the hair, the dress, the eyelashes, when snow falls around us and fills our chambers, our beds, our dishes, should we open a door, should the external air get access to our penetralia; when the crystal stream in which we must quench our thirst is a kettle of snow with a lamp of oil; when our sofas are of snow and our houses of snow: when snow was our decks, snow our awnings, snow our observatories, snow our larders, snow our salt; and when all the other uses of snow should be of no avail, our coffins and our graves were to be graves and coffins of snow!

"Is not this more than enough of snow to suf-

fice for admiration? Is it not worse that, during ten months in a year, the ground is snow, and ice, and slush; that, during the whole year, its tormenting, chilling, odious presence is ever before the eye? Who more than I has admired the glaciers of the extreme north? who more has loved to contemplate the icebergs sailing from the Pole before the tide and the gale, floating along the ocean, through calm and through storm, like castles, and towers, and mountains, gorgeous in colouring and magnificent, if often capricious in form? And have I, too, not sought amid the crashing and the splitting and the thundering roarings of a sea of moving mountains for the sublime, and felt that Nature could do no more? In all this there has been beauty, horror, danger, every thing that could excite: they would have excited a poet even to the verge of madness. But to see, to have seen, ice and snow, to have felt snow and ice for ever, and nothing for ever but snow and ice, during all the months of a year; to have seen and felt but uninterrupted and unceasing ice and snow during all the months of four years—this it is that has made the sight of those most chilling and wearisome objects an evil which is still in our recollection, as if the remembrance would never cease."

Commander Ross, the captain's nephew, set out on an excursion to a horde of Esquimaux. In the

course of his narrative, he says, "The guides were now completely at fault, as they could not see twenty yards before them, from the thick drifting of the snow-storm; so that we were obliged to give up all further attempts for the present and to consent to their building a snow hut.

"This was completed in half an hour; and certainly never did we feel better pleased with this kind of architecture, which in so very short a time produced for us a dwelling affording shelter at least as perfect as we could have obtained within the best house of stone. It was, indeed, barely large enough to hold our party of four; but, in the wretched plight that we now were, even a worse accommodation than this would have been most acceptable. Our clothes were so penetrated by the fine snow-dust, and frozen so hard, that we could not take them off for a long time, and not till the warmth of our bodies had begun to soften them. We also suffered exceedingly from thirst; so that while the Esquimaux were busied with the arrangements of their building, we were employed in melting snow by the aid of a spirit lamp. The quantity which we thus produced in a short time was sufficient for the whole party; while the delight of our guides was only equalled by their surprise; since with them the same operation is the work of

three or four hours, performed as it is in stone vessels over their open oil lamps.

There was, however, an attendant evil, owing chiefly to the exceeding smallness of our hut. Its walls naturally melted also; and so fast that our dresses became soon wetted to such a degree, that we were compelled to take them off, and get into the fur bags. Here at length we could keep out this enemy, and in those we slept."

* * * * *

"It blew so hard a gale from the north during the whole day, that we were unable to leave the hut .... The wind without howled round our walls of snow, and the drift which it brought sounded against them with a hissing noise, which I was glad to forget in the talk that rendered it for a time inaudible."

The moment when Commander Ross discovers the Western Ocean is remarkable:—

"The party which I had thus quitted for a short time had announced their arrival on the shores of the Western Sea by three cheers: it was to me, as well as to them, and still more indeed to the leader than to his followers, a moment of interest, well deserving the usual hail of seamen; for it was the ocean that we had pursued, the object of our hopes and exertions; the free space which, as we once had hoped, was to have carried us round the Ame-

rican continent, which ought to have given us the triumph for which we and all our predecessors had laboured so long and so hard. It would have done all this had not Nature forbidden; it might have done all this had our chain of lakes been an inlet; had this valley formed a free communication between the eastern and western seas; but we had at least ascertained the impossibility. The desired sea was at our feet; we were soon to be travelling along its surface; and in our final disappointment, we had at least the consolation of having removed all doubts and quenched all anxiety, of feeling that where God had said No, it was for man to submit, and to be thankful for what had been granted. It was a solemn moment, never to be forgotten; and never was the cheering of a seaman so impressive, breaking as it did on the stillness of the night, amid this dreary waste of ice and snow, where there was not an object to remind us of life, and not a sound seemed ever to have been heard.

* * * * *

"How extremely unwilling I was to return at all from this point, with the main object of the expedition almost, it may be said, within our reach, may well be imagined; but others must be in the same situation before they can conceive the intensity of this regret and the severity of this disappointment. Our distance from Cape Turnagain

was now not greater than the space which we had already travelled; as many more spare days at our command would have enabled us to do all that was remaining to return triumphant to the Victory, and to carry to England a truly worthy fruit of our long and hard labours. But these days were not in our power.

* * * *

"We now, therefore, unfurled our flag for the usual ceremony, and took possession of what we saw as far as the distant point, while that on which we stood was named Victory Point, being the *ne plus ultra* of our labour. . . . . .

"On Victory Point we erected a cairn of stones six feet high, and we enclosed in it a canister, containing a brief account of the proceedings of the expedition since its departure from England. Such has been the custom, and to that it was our business to conform; though I must say that we did not entertain the most remote hope, that our little history would ever meet a European's eyes, even had it escaped the accident of falling into the hands of the Esquimaux. Yet we should have gone about our work with something like hope, if not confidence, had we then known that we were reputed as lost men, if even still alive, and that our ancient and tried friend, Captain Back, was about to seek for us, and to restore us once more

to society and home. And if it is not impossible that the course of his present investigations from Cape Turnagain eastward may lead him to this very spot, that he may find the record and proof of our own turnagain, we have known what it is for the wanderer in these solitudes to alight upon such traces of friends and of home, and can almost envy him the imagined happiness; while we shall rejoice to hear that he has done that in which we failed, and perhaps not less than if we had ourselves succeeded in completing the long pursued and perilous work."

The love of country expressed amidst these unparalleled sufferings, and in these dreary regions; those names, consigned to a monument of snow, and which shall never be found again; that unknown glory, reposing under a few stones, and from the depths of everlasting solitude addressing a posterity that shall never exist; those written words, which shall never speak in those mute deserts, or which shall expire amidst the crash of ice broken by a tempest which no ear shall hear—all these things considered together astound me. But, the first emotion over, we find, as a last result, that death is at the end of everything: the life and the memory of man are lost on every shore in the silence and the frost of the grave.

Behold the unfortunate Jacquemont expiring, far away from France, surrounded by all the populations of Hindostan: is his voice less affecting than that of those sailors calling to mind their country in the hyperborean solitudes? Lying on his back, because he was too weak to sit up, he wrote with a pencil, on the 1st of December, 1832, this note to his brother:—

"My end, if it is that which is approaching, is gentle and easy. If thou wert here, seated on my bed-side, with our father and Frederick, my heart would be wrung, and I should not wait the approach of death with this resignation and this serenity. Take comfort; comfort our father; comfort one another, my friends.

"But I am exhausted by this effort to write. I must bid you farewell, farewell! Oh! how your poor Victor loves you!—For the last time, farewell!"

The modern travellers of France may compete in their delineations with the pictures presented by English travellers. In their descriptions of India you will find nothing so brilliant as the subjoined passage of M. de Lamartine's. The reader will be glad to quit that land without trees, that snow-sand marked with the tracks of foxes and bears, those frost-bound huts lighted by what Captain

Ross calls "the southern twilight," to warm himself beneath pines on the sands trodden by camels, amidst caravans, in the sunshine of Syria.

"About half a league from the town, towards the west, the Emir Fakardin has planted a forest of pines on a sandy plateau which spreads itself between the sea and the plain of Baghdad, a handsome Arab village at the foot of the Lebanon. The Emir, I was told, planted this magnificent forest as a rampart against the invasion of the immense hills of red sand which rise a little further on, and which threatened to overwhelm Beyroot and its rich plantations. The forest has become superb: the trunks of the trees are from sixty to eighty feet high, and perfectly straight; and they touch one another with their wide-spreading heads, which cover an immense space with their shadow. Paths of sand wind among the trunks of the pines, and afford the softest surface for the horses' feet. The rest of the ground is a light downy greensward interspersed with flowers of the brightest red. The bulbs of the wild hyacinths are so large as not to be crushed when trodden upon by the horses. Through the colonnades formed by the trunks of these pines, you see, on the one hand, the white and reddish sand-hills that intercept the view of the sea, on the other the plain of Baghdad and the course of the river in that plain, and a

corner of the gulf, resembling a small lake, so completely is it inclosed by the horizon of the land, and the twelve or fifteen Arab villages scattered over the last slopes of the Lebanon, and lastly the groups of the Lebanon itself, which form a curtain to that scene. The light is so bright and the air so clear, that you distinguish, at the distance of several leagues, the forms of the cedars or of the carob-trees on the mountains, or the huge eagles swimming without moving their wings in the ocean of ether. This pine-wood is certainly the most magnificent of all the scenes that I ever beheld in my life. The sky, the mountains, the snow, the blue horizon of the sea, the red and funereal horizon of the desert of sand; the meanders of the river; the solitary heads of the cypresses; the bunches of palm-trees scattered over the country: the graceful appearance of the cottages covered with orange-trees and with vines drooping from the roofs; the austere look of the lofty Maronite monasteries, throwing broad patches of shade or large jets of light on the perpendicular sides of the Lebanon; the caravans of camels, laden with merchandise from Damascus, passing in silence between the trunks of the trees; troops of indigent Jews mounted on asses, holding two children in each arm; women shrouded in white veils, on horseback, marching to the sound of the

fife and tambourine, surrounded by a crowd of children, dressed in red stuff bordered with gold, and dancing before their horses; a few mounted Arabs, running the dgerid around us upon steeds whose manes literally sweep the ground; groups of Turks, seated before a coffee-house constructed of boughs, smoking their pipes or saying their prayers; a little further off, the desert hills of endless sand, tinged with gold by the rays of the evening sun, and from which the wind raises clouds of scorching dust; lastly, the dull roaring of the sea mingling with the musical sound of the wind in the heads of the pines, and the notes of thousands of unknown birds—all these together present to the eye and the mind of the spectator a combination the most sublime, the most delightful, and at the same time the most melancholy, that ever intoxicated my soul. It is the scene of my dreams, to which I shall not fail to revert every day."

The reader will be of the same mind with the poet: he too will be sure to revert to this scene.

NOVELS. SAD TRUTHS ARISING FROM LONG CORRESPONDENCES. EPISTOLARY STYLE.

NOVELS were still, at the end of the last century, comprehended in the general proscription. Richardson slept forgotten: his countrymen found in his style traces of the inferior society in which he had lived. Fielding maintained his ground well. Sterne, the aspirant to originality, was out of date. "The Vicar of Wakefield" was still read.

If Richardson's style is not good—and of this we foreigners are no judges—he will not live, for it is only by style that a writer lives. In vain we revolt against this truth: the best written work, adorned with portraits of the most striking resemblance, possessing a thousand other recommendations, falls still-born, if deficient in style. Style, of which there are a thousand kinds, is not to be acquired; it is the gift of Heaven, it is a natural

talent. But if Richardson has been forsaken only for certain vulgar expressions unendurable by elegant society, he may revive; the revolution which is taking place, by lowering the aristocracy and raising the middling classes, will render less perceptible, or remove altogether, the traces of lowly habits and of an inferior language.

Novels in letters, considering the narrow space within which the action and the characters are confined, lack that local interest and that philosophic truth, which are attached to the perusal of real correspondence. Take, for instance, the works of Voltaire: read the first letter, addressed in 1715, to the Marquise de Mimeure, and the last note, addressed on the 26th of May, 1778, four days before the death of the writer, to Count de Lally Tollendal; reflect on all that passed during that interval of sixty-three years.

Observe that long procession of the dead: Chaulieu, Cideville, Thiriot, Algarotti, Genonville, Helvetius; of the other sex, the Princess of Bayreuth, the Marechale de Villars, the Marquise de Pompadour, the Comtesse de Fontaine, the Marquise du Chatelet, Madame Denis, and those creatures of pleasure who pass through life laughing, the Lecouvreurs, the Luberts, the Gaussins, the Salles, the Carmargos; Terpsichores, "with steps measured by the Graces," as the poet says,

and whose light ashes are at this day trodden by the aërial feet of a Taglioni.

When you peruse a correspondence for any length of time, you turn the page, and the name upon one side is no longer found on the other. A new Genonville, a new Du Chatelet appear, and twenty letters forward they vanish in their turn: friendship's succeed friendships, loves follow loves.

The illustrious veteran, as he advances in years, ceases to be connected, except by glory, with the rising generations; he still addresses them from the desert of Ferney, but he has nothing more than his voice among them. What a distance between the lines to the only son of Louis XIV.,

> Noble sang du plus grand de rois,
> Son amour et notre esperance,—

and the stanzas to Madame du Deffant,

> Eh quoi! vous êtes étonnée,
> Qu' au bout de quatre-vingts hivers,
> Ma muse faible et surannée
> Puisse encor fredonner des vers!
>
> Quelque fois un peu de verdure
> Rit sous le glaçons de nos champs,
> Elle console la nature,
> Mais elle sèche en peu de temps.

The King of Prussia, the Empress of Russia, all

the great, all the celebrated, of the earth, receive on their knees, as though it were a diploma of immortality, a few words from the writer, who saw Louis XIV. expire, Louis XV. and his age pass away, Louis XVI. born and reigning, and who, placed between the great king and the martyr king, is himself alone the whole history of France during his time.

But a private correspondence between two persons who have loved each other presents, perhaps, something still more sad, for it is no longer *men*, but *the man*, that one sees.

At first the letters are long, lively, frequent. The day is not sufficient for them. The writer commences at sunset: he pens a few words by moonlight, charging the chaste, silent, discreet luminary to cover with its modesty a thousand wishes. The lovers parted at dawn; they await its first rays to write what they had forgotten to say during the hours of rapture. A thousand vows cover the paper on which are reflected the roses of Aurora; a thousand kisses are deposited on the burning words, which seem to emanate from the first look of the sun. Not an idea, an image, a reverie, an incident, an uneasiness, but has its letter.

Some morning or other, something scarcely perceptible fixes itself upon the beauty of this passion,

like the first wrinkle on the brow of an adored female. The breath and the perfume of love expire in those pages of youth, as a breeze languishes at evening among the flowers: we perceive it, but will not confess it to ourselves. The letters become shorter and less frequent; they are filled with news, with descriptions, with extraneous matters: some are delayed, but we are less uneasy; certain of loving, and being beloved, the parties are become reasonable; they have ceased to grumble, they submit to absence. Vows are still interchanged; they are still the same words; but they are dead words,—the soul is wanting. The "I love you," is now but an expression of habit, an obligatory phrase, the "I have the honour to be" of an ordinary epistle. By-and-by the manner becomes cold or angry. The post-day is no longer awaited with impatience; it is dreaded; it becomes a fatigue to write. We blush at the thought of the follies that we have committed to paper; how glad we should be to get back our letters, and to throw them into the fire! How has this come to pass? Is it a new attachment that is commencing, or an old attachment that is ending? No matter: it is love that is expiring before the object loved.

Success to novels in letters and without letters, in which the affections are destroyed only by

violence, and are never impaired by that secret operation which is incessantly going on in human nature—the slow fever of time, which produces disgust and lassitude, which dispels all illusion and all enchantment, which undermines our passions, blights our loves, and changes our hearts, as it changes our hair and our years.

There is, however, an exception to this infirmity of human things: it sometimes happens that in an energetic soul love lasts long enough to transform itself into passionate friendship, to become a duty, to assume the qualities of virtue; it then loses its natural frailty and lives in its immortal principles. Richardson has wonderfully delineated a passion of this kind in the character of Clementine.

For the rest, setting aside the fictitious letters of novels, and considering only the epistolary language, the English have nothing comparable with the letters of Madame de Sevigné. The letters of Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke, Lady Mary Wortley Montague, and lastly, those of Junius, which are supposed to be by Sir Philip Francis, are works, not letters: they are all more or less like the letters of the younger Pliny and of Voiture. For my own part, I should prefer to them a few letters of the unfortunate Lord Russel, of Lady Russel, of Miss Anne Seward, and the little that we know of the letters of Lord Byron.

MODERN NOVELS.

FROM Clarissa and Tom Jones have sprung the two principal branches of the family of the modern English Novels—the novels containing family pictures and domestic dramas; and the novels composed of adventures and delineations of general society. After Richardson's time the manners of the west end of the town made an irruption into the domain of fiction: novels were filled with castles and country-seats, lords and ladies, adventures at watering-places, horse-races, balls, at the opera, at Ranelagh, with a chit-chat, a tittle-tattle, that knew no end. Presently, the scene was transferred to Italy; the lovers crossed the Alps, amidst tremendous perils and mental agonies that would have drawn tears from lions. The jargon of high life was adopted: hence the fashion of certain words, the affectation of a certain language, of a certain pronunciation, changing in the upper class of English society almost with every session

of parliament. A simple reader is quite astounded to find that he is ignorant of English which he fancied that he understood half-a-year ago. In 1822, at the time of my embassy to London, the fashionable was expected to exhibit at the first glance an unhappy and unhealthy man; to have an air of negligence about his person, long nails, a beard neither entire nor shaven, but as if grown for a moment unawares, and forgotten during the preoccupations of wretchedness; hair in disorder; a sublime, wild, wicked eye; lips compressed in disdain of human nature; a Byronian heart, overwhelmed with weariness and disgust of life.

The dandy of the present day must have a conquering, frivolous, insolent look. He must pay particular attention to his toilet, wear moustaches or a beard trimmed into a circle like Queen Elizabeth's ruff, or like the radiant disk of the sun. He shows the proud independence of his character by keeping his hat on his head, by lolling upon sofas, by thrusting his boots into the faces of the ladies seated in admiration upon chairs before him. He rides with a cane, which he carries like a taper, regardless of the horse, which he bestrides as it were by accident. His health must be perfect, and he must always have five or six felicities upon his hands. Some radical dandies who have advanced the furthest towards the future have a pipe.

But, no doubt, all this has changed, even during the time that I have taken to describe it.

Among the thousands of novels which have inundated England for half a century past, few have maintained their ground. The works of Anne Radcliffe form a distinct species. Those of Mrs. Barbauld, Miss Edgeworth, and Miss Burney, have, it is said, many chances of living.

"The laws," says Montaigne, "ought to lay restraints upon unqualified and useless writers, as it does upon vagrants and idlers. Myself and a hundred others ought to be banished from the hands of our people. Scribbling seems to be a certain symptom of a distracted age. When did we write so much as since we have been in trouble? When did the Romans as at the time of their ruin."

I have scarcely made mention of the English women who have formerly shone, or who still shine in literature, because, in pursuing my plan, I should have been drawn into comparisons which I do not choose to make. Madame de Staël is the queen of her epoch, and her works have remained.

Some French women, even at the present day, are distinguished by extraordinary merit as writers: one of them has opened a route in which she will not be much followed, and by which she will certainly not travel to posterity. Women, when they

possess genius, mix with it secrets which constitute part of the charm of their talent, and which cannot be separated from it: now, no one has a right to penetrate into those mysteries of the woman and the muse. Lastly, talent frequently changes its object and nature; one must have patience and wait, in order to admire it in its different forms. Several have been seduced and run away with, as it were, by their youthful years: brought back to the maternal home by the breaking of the spell, they have added to their lyre the grave or plaintive chord on which religion or misfortune is expressed.

WALTER SCOTT.—THE JEWESS.

BUT these different schools of sedentary novelists, novelists travelling in coaches or chaises, novelists of lake and mountain, novelists of cities and drawing-rooms, have all merged in the new school of Walter Scott, just as poetry has rushed into the track of Lord Byron.

The illustrious painter of Scotland seems to me to have created a false class; he has, in my opinion, confounded history and romance: the novelist has set about writing historical romances, and the historian romantic histories. I speak on this subject with some vexation, because I, who have described, loved, sung, extolled so much the old Christian temples, am dying of spleen from hearing them so constantly depreciated: there was left me as a last illusion, a cathedral; it has been taken from me by storm.

When an author enjoys a geneal reputation in his own country; when that reputation is sus-

tained for a great number of years; nobody, and least of all a foreigner, has a right to question the titles of this reputation; they are established on the most solid foundations—the true genius of the language, the national instinct, and the consent of public opinion.

I refuse, therefore, to sit in judgment on any English author, whose merit does not appear to me to reach that degree of superiority which it has in the eyes of his countrymen. If, in Walter Scott, I am frequently obliged to skip the interminable conversations; if I do not always meet with that select nature, that perfection of scenery, that originality, those thoughts, those traits, which I find in Manzoni and several of our modern novelists; it is my own fault. But one of the great merits of Walter Scott, in my opinion, is, that he may be put into the hands of every body. It requires much greater efforts of talent to interest whilst keeping within due bounds, than to please by overleaping them; it is not so easy to regulate the heart as to derange it.

Burke restricted the politics of England to the past; Walter Scott drove back the English to the middle ages: all that was written, manufactured, built, was Gothic: books, furniture, houses. churches, mansions. But the barons of the Magna Charta are now-a-days the fashionables of Bond

Street; a frivolous race, which is still encamped in the antique manorial halls, till the arrival of the two great modern barons, Equality and Liberty, who are preparing to dislodge them.

Walter Scott does not mould, like Richardson, upon the internal type of man: he likes rather to display the exterior of his personages. His fantasies possess a peculiar charm—witness the portrait of the Jewess in "Ivanhoe."

"Her form was exquisitely symmetrical, and was shown to advantage by a sort of eastern dress which she wore, according to the fashion of the females of her nation. Her turban of yellow silk suited well with the darkness of her complexion. The brilliancy of her eyes, the superb arch of her eyebrows, her well formed aquiline nose, her teeth as white as pearl, and the profusion of her sable tresses, which, each arranged in its own little spiral of twisted curls, fell down upon as much of a lovely neck and bosom as a simarre of the richest Persian silk, exhibiting flowers in their natural colours, embossed upon a purple ground, permitted to be visible—all these constituted a combination of loveliness, which yielded not to the loveliest of the maidens who surrounded her. It is true that, of the golden and pearl-studded clasps which closed her vest from the throat to the waist, the three uppermost were left unfastened on account of the

heat, which something enlarged the prospect to which we allude. A diamond necklace, with pendants of inestimable value, were by this means also made more conspicuous. The feather of an ostrich, fastened in her turban by an agraffe set with brilliants, was another distinction of the beautiful Jewess, and gave her the look of the very bride of the Canticles."

Fontanes, that friend whose loss I shall never cease to regret, asked me one day why the women of the Jewish race are handsomer than the men, I gave him a reason at once poetical and Christian. The Jewesses, I replied, have escaped the curse which has alighted upon their fathers, their husbands, and their sons. Not a Jewess was to be seen among the crowd of priests and the rabble who insulted the Son of Man, scourged him, crowned him with thorns, and subjected him to ignominy and the agony of the cross. The women of Judea believed in the Saviour; they loved, they followed him; they assisted him with their substance, they soothed him under afflictions. A woman at Bethany poured on his head the precious ointment which she kept in a vase of alabaster; the sinner anointed his feet with a perfumed oil, and wiped them with her hair. Christ, on his part, extended his grace and mercy to the Jewesses; he raised from the dead the son of the widow of

Nain, and Martha's brother, Lazarus; he cured Simon's mother-in-law and the woman who touched the hem of his garment; to the Samaritan woman he was a spring of living water, and a compassionate judge to the woman taken in adultery. The daughters of Jerusalem wept over him; the holy women accompanied him to Calvary, brought balm and spices, and sought him weeping at the sepulchre. "Woman, why weepest thou?" His first appearance after his resurrection was to Magdalen. She did not recognise him; but he said to her, "Mary!" At the sound of that voice, Magdalen's eyes were opened, and she answered, "Master!" The reflection of some beautiful ray must have rested on the brow of the Jewesses.

Fontanes appeared satisfied with these reasons, which cannot fail to be conclusive for the *learned sisters*.

THE LAKE SCHOOL—POETS AMONG THE WORKING CLASSES.

At the same time that the novel was passing to the *romantic* state, poetry was undergoing a similar transformation. Cowper forsook the French school, for the purpose of reviving the national school. Burns commenced the same revolution in Scotland. After them came the restorers of ballads: Coleridge, Wordsworth, Southey, Wilson, Moore, Crabbe, Morgan, Rogers, Hogg, have brought down this species of poetry to the present day. Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope," Moore's "Lalla Rookh," Rogers's "Pleasures of Memory," have obtained extraordinary success. Several of these poets belong to what is called "the Lake School," because they resided near the Lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland, and sometimes sang their beauties.

Campbell, Moore, Rogers, Wordsworth, Southey, Hunt, Knowles, Lord Holland, are still living for

the honour of English literature: but one ought to be English born in order to appreciate the full merit of particular kinds of compositions, though it is apparent enough to the countrymen of the authors. I know not if it would be possible to translate well into French the "Melodies" of Thomas Moore, the bard of Erin. Apply this remark to those short pieces of poetry of divers denominations, which charm the mind and the ear of an Englishman, an Irishman, a Scotchman. Burns, the lyric, whose death has been sung by Campbell, and the sailor's songster, are sons of the British soil; they could not live in their energy and their grace under any other sun. We pretend to understand Anacreon and Catullus: I am persuaded that the Attic delicacy and the Roman urbanity escape us.

England has from time to time beheld poets spring up among the working classes. Bloomfield, who was bred a shoemaker, is the author of "The Farmer's Boy;" a poem, the language of which is extremely scientific. At the present day, it is a blacksmith who shines. Vulcan was the son of Jupiter. Hogg, who is just dead, the first poet of Scotland after Burns, was a farmer.

We have also our Muses among the lower classes. I shall say nothing of the fair Cordière and Clemence of Bourges, because, in spite of their talents and their names, they were wealthy. Mas-

ter Adam, cabinet-maker of Nevers, might be aptly placed against the English shoemaker. At this moment, J. C. Jouvenot, a working locksmith, has just published two volumes of poems, comedies and tragedies, Reboul, baker of Nimes, has addressed to a mother these stanzas of poetic and touching inspiration :—

L'ANGE ET L'ENFANT.

Un ange au radieux visage,
Penché sur le bord d'un berçeau,
Semblait contempler son image
Comme dans l'onde d'un ruisseau.

" Charmant enfant qui me ressemble,
Disait-il, oh ! viens avec moi :
Viens, nous serons heureux ensemble,
La terre est indigne de toi.

" Là, jamais entière allégresse ;
L'ame y souffre de ses plaisirs ;
Les cris de joie ont leur tristesse ;
Les voluptés ont leurs soupirs.

" Eh ! quoi ! les chagrins, les alarmes,
Viendraient troubler ce front si pur,
Et par l'amertume des larmes,
Se terniraient ces yeux d'azur !

" Non, non, dans les champs de l'espace
Avec moi tu vas t'envoler ;
La Providence te fait grâce
Des jours que tu devais couler."

Et, secouant ses blanches ailes,
L'ange à ces mots a pris l'essor
Vers les demeures éternelles . . . . .
Pauvre mère, ton fils est mort.

If M. Reboul has taken a wife from among the daughters of Ceres, and she should become his Muse, France will have her Fornarina.

Here are some lines by a clerk in the post-office at Poligny :—

ELEGIE AUX MANES DE MARIE GRAND.

Son aurore était belle ; elle était à cet âge
Où l'aimable langueur qui pâlit le visage
Donne aux yeux tant de charme et parle à tant de cœurs !
Elle était à cet âge où l'on verse des pleurs.
O pleurs délicieux ! . . . . Sa paupière arrosée,
Payait à la nature une douce rosée,
Déjà dans ses yeux bleus on voyait chaque jour
Eclore, puis mourir un beau rayon d'amour.
* * * * *
Elle était * * * *
Tendre comme l'agneau qui bêle à la colline
Quand son dos caressant vers la brebis s'incline.
Hélas ! tant de vertus ne devraient point finir.
Pourquoi n'en reste-t-il, hélas ! qu'un souvenir ?
* * * * *
Elle tendit les bras, et nos cœurs s'enlacèrent ;
Nos soupirs confondus ensemble s'étouffèrent !
Cette heure si cruelle était pour nous des jours :
Cette heure vit encore, et je pleure toujours.

THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.—KNOX.

I HAVE just named Hogg, the last cottage-poet of the three kingdoms: I shall now say a few words concerning the last Muse of the British palaces, to show how everything dies in this age of death. The princess Charlotte of England has sung the beauties of Claremont, by applying to them these lines of an eminent poet:—

> To Claremont's terrac'd heights and Esher's groves,
> Where, in the sweetest solitude, embrac'd
> By the soft windings of the silent Mole,
> From courts and cities Charlotte finds repose:
> Enchanting vale! beyond whate'er the muse
> Has of Achaia or Hesperia sung.
> O vale of bliss! O softly swelling hills!
> On which the power of cultivation lies,
> And joys to see the wonders of its toil.

When one sees this queen presumptive, so young and so happy, thus musing in the groves of Esher, we have reason to believe that she would have descended to the grave with less pain from the throne of Elizabeth than from the terraces of Claremont. I had seen that princess, when a child, in the arms

of her mother; I did not find her, in 1822, at Windsor with her father. These depredations, which death is incessantly committing among us, nevertheless surprise us: but who knows whether it was not out of mercy that Providence so soon withdrew from the world the daughter of George IV.? What apparent felicity attended Marie Antoinette when she came to Versailles to place upon her head the fairest crown in the world! Overwhelmed a few years later with outrages of every kind, she found not a voice in France to say, Peace to her sorrows! The august victim was sung only in foreign lands by fugitives or by strangers. Delille demanded expiations from his faithful lyre; Alfieri composed the admirable Sonnet, "Regina sempre;" Knox mourned the captivity of the widowed queen and martyr.

If thy breast soft pity knows,
O! drop a tear with me:
Feel for th' unexampled woes
Of widow'd royalty.

Fallen, fallen from a throne!
Lo! beauty, grandeur, pow'r;
Hark! 'tis a queen's, a mother's moan;
From yonder dismal tow'r.

I hear her say, or seem to say,
"Ye who listen to my story,
Learn how transient beauty's day,
How unstable human glory!"

SONGS.

LORD DORSET.—BERANGER.

THE song, as ancient in England as it is in the kingdom of St. Louis, has assumed all sorts of forms: it changes to a hymn for religion; it remains a song for the thousand trifles and the thousand incidents of life, gay or grave. Lord Dorset's song, written at sea during the first Dutch war, in 1665, the night before an engagement, is an elegant composition.

To all you ladies now at land
  We men at sea indite;
But first would have you understand
  How hard it is to write;
The Muses now, and Neptune too,
We must implore to write to you,
  With a fa la, la la, la la.

For though the Muses should prove kind,
  And fill our empty brain;
Yet if rough Neptune rouse the wind
  To wave the azure main,
Our paper, pen, and ink, and we.
Roll up and down our ships at sea,
  With a fa la, la la, la la.

Then if we write not by each post,
Think not we are unkind;
Nor yet conclude our ships are lost
By Dutchmen or by wind;
Our tears we'll send a speedier way,
The tide shall bring them twice a day,
With a fa la, la la, la la.

The King, with wonder and surprise,
Will swear the seas grow bold,
Because the tides will higher rise
Than e'er they did of old:
But let him know it is our tears
Bring floods of grief to Whitehall Stairs,
With a fa la, la la, la la.

Should foggy Opdam chance to know,
Our sad and dismal story,
The Dutch would scorn so weak a foe,
And quit their fort at Goree:
For what resistance can they find
From men who've left their hearts behind?
With a fa la, la la, la la.

Let wind and weather do its worst,
Be you to us but kind,
Let Dutchmen vapour, Spaniards curse,
No sorrow we shall find:
'Tis then no matter how things go,
Or who's our friend or who's our foe.
With a fa la, la la, la la.

To pass our tedious hours away,
We throw a merry main;

Or else at serious ombre play:
But why should we in vain
Each other's ruin thus pursue?
We were undone when we left you.
With a fa la, la la, la la.

But now our fears tempestuous grow,
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps permit some happier man
To kiss your hand or flirt your fan.
With a fa la, la la, la la.

When any mournful tune you hear,
That dies in every note,
As if it sigh'd with each man's care
For being so remote:
Think then how often love we've made
To you, when all those tunes were play'd.
With a fa la, la la, la la.

In justice you can not refuse
To think of our distress;
When we for hopes of honour lose
Our certain happiness;
All those designs are but to prove
Ourselves more worthy of your love.
With a fa la, la la, la la.

And now we've told you all our loves,
And likewise all our fears,
In hopes this declaration moves
Some pity for our tears;
Let's hear of no inconstancy—
We have too much of that at sea.
With a fa la, la la, la, la.

This is the French song of the eighteenth century.

A very pretty little song, "The Pigeon," represents a young female sending a message to her lover; it begins thus:

Why tarries my love,
Why tarries my love,
Why tarries my love from me?
Come hither my dove,
I'll write to my love,
And send him a letter by thee.

"God save the King," Thomson's "Rule Britannia," and Burns's ballad "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," must remain in their native language. The "Two Dogs," and the "Cottier's Saturday Night," by Burns, are particularly admired. He wrote several drinking songs; some of them describe village scenes. All these pieces, though full of humour, have not the elegance of the songs of Desaugiers.

But if Thibaut, Count of Champagne, surpassed all the English Thibauts of the thirteenth century, Beranger in the nineteenth leaves far behind him all the Berangers of Great Britain. Art detracts nothing from success with the multitude, when it is united with genuine talent. Beranger's songs, composed with as much care as Racine bestowed on his verses, and which are wrought, as it were

by a magnifying glass, have descended to the lower classes of society: the common people have learned them by heart, as scholars learn the speech of Theramenes. As La Fontaine rises to the highest style in fable, so does Beranger in song. The popularity attached to pieces written on particular occasions, to witty pasquinades, will pass away, but superior beauties will remain. You perceive in the works of Beranger, beneath a surface of gaiety, a substratum of melancholy, which belongs to whatever is sincere and permanent in the human mind. Stanzas such as these will belong to every future France, and will be repeated in every age.

Vous vieillirez, ô ma belle maitresse;
Vous vieillirez, et je ne serai plus.
Pour moi les temps semble, dans sa vitesse,
Compter deux fois les jours que j'ai perdus.
Survivez-moi; mais que l'âge pénible
Vous trouve encore fidèle à mes leçons;
Et bonne vieille, au coin d'un feu paisible,
De votre ami répétez les chansons.

Lorsque les yeux chercheront sous vos rides
Les traits charmans qui m'auront inspiré,
Des doux récits les jeunes gens avides
Diront: Quel fut cet ami tant pleuré?
De mon amour, peignez s'il est possible,
L'ardeur, l'ivresse, et même les soupçons;
Et bonne vieille, au coin d'un feu paisible,
De votre ami répétez les chansons.

On vous dira : Savait-il être aimable ?
Et sans rougir vous direz : Je l'aimais.
D'un trait méchant se montra-t-il capable ?
Avec orgueil vous répondrez : Jamais.
Ah ! dites bien qu'amoureux et sensible
D'un luth joyeux il attendrit les sons ;
Et bonne vieille, au coin d'un feu paisible,
De votre ami répétez les chansons.

Objet chéri, quand mon renom futile
De vos vieux ans charmera les douleurs,
A mon portrait quand votre main débile
Chaque printemps suspendra quelques fleurs,
Levez les yeux vers ce monde invisible
Où pour toujours nous nous réunissons ;
Et bonne vieille, au coin d'un feu paisible,
De votre ami répétez les chansons.

On leaving Dieppe, the road leading to Paris ascends rather rapidly ; on the right, at the top of the hill, is seen the wall of a cemetery : along this wall there is a rope-walk. One evening last summer I was sauntering upon this road : two rope-makers going backward, abreast, and balancing themselves first on one leg, then on the other, were singing together in a low tone. I listened ; they were at this stanza of the "Vieux Caporal" :—

Qui là-bas sanglote et regarde ?
Eh ! c'est la veuve du tambour.
En Russie, à l'arrière-garde,
J'ai porté son fils nuit et jour.
Comme le père, enfant et femme,
Sans moi restaient sous les frimas,
Elle va prier pour mon ame.

Conscrits, au pas.
Ne pleurez pas.
Ne pleurez pas.
Marchez au pas.
Au pas, au pas, au pas, au pas!

These men pronounced the chorus: *Conscrits au pas. Ne pleurez pas . . . Marchez au pas, au pas, au pas,* in a tone so manly, and so pathetic, that tears started into my eyes. Marking the step themselves, as they drew out their hemp, they seemed to be spinning the last moment of the *Vieux Caporal.* Who had taught them this ballad? Assuredly not literature, not criticism, not taught admiration, all that is subservient to reputation and renown, but a genuine accent from some quarter or other had reached their humble minds. I cannot express all that there was in this glory peculiar to Beranger, in this glory thus solitarily revealed by two sailors, singing at sun-set, in sight of the sea, the death of a soldier.

BEATTIE.

BURNS, Mason, Cowper, died during my emigration to London, before and in 1800; they concluded the century: I began the new one. Darwin and Beattie died two years after my return from exile.

Beattie had announced the new era of the lyre. "The Minstrel, or the Progress of Genius," delineates the first effects of the Muse on a young bard, who is yet a stranger to the spirit by which he is tormented. Sometimes the future poet seats himself on the margin of the sea during a storm; sometimes he quits the village sports to listen alone and at a distance to the sound of the bagpige. The poem is written in the Spenserian stanza.

The rolls of fame I will not now explore;
Nor need I here describe in learned lay,
How forth the minstrel far'd in days of yore,
Right glad of heart, though homely in array;
His waving locks and beard all hoary grey:

While from his bending shoulder decent hung
His harp—the sole companion of his way,
Which to the whistling wind responsive rung:
And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

The wight whose tale these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of an humble pair.
* * * *

There lived in Gothic days, as legends tell,
A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree;
Whose sires, perchance, in Fairyland might dwell,
Sicilian groves or vales of Arcady;
But he, I ween, was of the north countrie;
A nation fam'd for song and beauty's charms;
Zealous, yet modest; innocent, though free;
Patient of toil, serene amidst alarms;
Inflexible in faith, invincible in arms.
* * * *
——— Poor Edwin was no vulgar boy,
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye,
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaud, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy:
Silent when glad; affectionate, though shy;
And now his look was most demurely sad;
And now he laughed aloud, yet none knew why.
The neighbours star'd and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad;
Some deem'd him wond'rous wise, and some believ'd him mad.

But why should I his childish feats display?
Concourse and noise and toil he ever fled;
Nor car'd to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps; but to the forest sped;
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head;
Or where the maze of some bewilder'd stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, releas'd the weary team.

Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine;
And sees on high, amidst th' encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine:
While waters, woods, and winds in concert join
And Echo swells the chorus to the skies.

* * * *

And oft he traced the uplands to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain grey,
And lake, dim-gleaming on the smoky lawn:
Far to the west the long long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for a while.

* * * *

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost,
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of vapour, tost
In billows, lengthening to th' horizon round,
Now coop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd!
And hear the voice of song and mirth rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound!

See in the rear of the warm summer shower
The visionary boy for shelter fly;
For now the storm of summer rain is o'er
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant, is the sky.
And lo! in the dark east, expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting sun!
Fond fool that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chase thine ardour has begun!
'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purpos'd race be run.

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wander'd down the vale.
There would he dream of graves and corses pale;

And ghosts that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain and wail,
Till silenced by the owl's terrific song
Or blast that shrieks by fits the shuddering aisles along.

Or when the setting moon in crimson dyed
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man, he hied,
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep,
And there let Fancy rove at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entranced sight.
* * * *
The dream is fled . . . .
Even now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre blow,
Where thousand pearls the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze are borne.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crown'd with her pail the tripping milkmaid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield, and, hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous waggon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonish'd springs;
Slow tolls the village clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings:
Deep mourns the turtle in sequester'd bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aërial tower.

* * * *
Responsive to the sprightly pipe, when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclin'd,
Sooth'd with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Ah then all jollity seem'd noise and folly
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refin'd,
Ah what is mirth but turbulence unholy
When with the charm compar'd of heav'nly melancholy!
* * * *
Song was his favourite and first pursuit.
The wild harp rang to his advent'rous hand,
And languish'd to his breath the plaintive flute.
His infant muse, though artless, was not mute:
Of elegance as yet he took no care;
For this of time and culture is the fruit;
And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare:
As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

The quotation is long, but it is important for the history of poetry. Beattie has gone through the entire series of reveries and melancholy ideas of which a hundred other poets have fancied themselves the discoverers. Beattie proposed to continue his poem: he did in fact write a second canto. Edwin hears one evening a solemn voice rising from the bottom of a valley; it is that of a hermit, who, having experienced the illusions of the world, has buried himself in this retirement, to indulge in pious meditation and to sing the wonderful works of the Creator. This hermit instructs the young *minstrel*, and reveals to him the secret

of his genius. The idea is a happy one, but the execution is not equally felicitous. The concluding stanzas of the new canto are devoted to the memory of a friend. Beattie was destined to shed tears; the death of his son broke his paternal heart: like Ossian, after the death of his Oscar, he hung his harp upon the branches of an oak. Perhaps Beattie's son was the young *minstrel* whom his father had sung, and whose footsteps he no longer perceived upon the hill.

LORD BYRON.

THE ELM OF HARROW *.

In the earliest compositions of Lord Byron, we meet with striking imitations of the "Minstrel." At the period of my exile in England, Lord Byron was at the school of Harrow, a village about ten miles from London. He was a boy; I was young, and as unknown as he. I was destined to precede him in the career of letters, and to remain in it after him. He had been brought up on the heaths of Scotland, on the sea-shore, as I had been on the heaths of Brittany on the sea-shore. He was at first fond of the Bible and Ossian, as I was fond of them. He sang in Newstead Abbey the recol-

* All that follows, to the conclusion, is extracted from my Memoirs. I have merely abridged some passages which relate to myself, as I cannot say in my lifetime all that I shall say in my grave. It is a most convenient thing to be dead, in order to talk without restraint.

lections of childhood, as I sang them in the castle of Combourg.

When I roved, a young highlander, o'er the dark heath,
And climb'd thy steep summit, O Morven! of snow;
To gaze on the torrent that thunder'd beneath,
Or the mist of the tempest, that gather'd below:
* * * * *

I arose with the dawn, with my dog as my guide,
From mountain to mountain I bounded along,
I breasted the billows of Dee's rushing tide,
And heard at a distance the Highlander's song:
At eve, on my heath-covered couch of repose,
No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view,
And warm to the skies my devotions arose,
For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

I left my bleak home and my visions are gone,
The mountains are vanish'd, my youth is no more;
As the last of my race I must wither alone,
And delight but in days I have witness'd before;
Ah! splendour has rais'd but embitter'd my lot,
More dear were the scenes that my infancy knew.
* * * * *

Adieu, then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred,
Thou sweet flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu!
No home in the forest shall shelter my head,
Ah, Mary! what home could be mine without you!"

In my long solitary rambles in the neighbourhood of London, I several times passed through the village of Harrow, without knowing what a genius it contained. I have sat in the churchyard, at the foot of the elm, beneath which, in 1807,

when I was returning from Palestine, Byron wrote these verses:—

Spot of my youth! whose hoary branches sigh,
Swept by the breeze that fans thy cloudless sky;
Where now alone I muse, who oft have trod
With those I lov'd thy soft and verdant sod;
With those who, scatter'd far, perchance deplore,
Like me, the happy scenes they knew before;
Oh! as I trace again thy winding hill,
Mine eyes admire, my heart adores thee still.
Thou drooping elm, beneath whose boughs I lay
And frequent mused the twilight hours away;
Where, as they once were wont, my limbs recline,
But, ah! without the thoughts which then were mine."

* * * * * *

When fate shall chill, at length, the fever'd breast,
And calm its cares and passions into rest;
Oft have I thought 'twould soothe my dying hour,
If aught may soothe, when life resigns her power;
To know some humbler grave, some narrow cell,
Would hide my bosom where it lov'd to dwell.
With this fond dream methinks 'twere sweet to die,
As here it linger'd, here my heart might lie,
Here might I sleep where all my hopes arose,
Scene of my youth and couch of my repose:
For ever stretch'd beneath this mantling shade,
Press'd by the turf where once my childhood play'd,
Wrapt by the soil that veils the spot I lov'd,
Mix'd with the earth o'er which my footsteps mov'd;
Bless'd by the tongues that charm'd my youthful ear,
Mourn'd by the few my soul acknowledg'd here;
Deplor'd by those in early days allied,
And unremember'd by the world beside.

And I will say: Hail ancient elm of dreams, at the foot of which Byron, as a boy, indulged the caprices of his age, at the time when I was pondering on René in thy shade, in that same shade to which the poet subsequently repaired in his turn, to ponder on Childe Harold! Byron demanded of the cemetery which witnessed the sports of his early life an unknown grave: a fruitless prayer, which glory has not granted.

THE TWO NEW LITERARY SCHOOLS.

SOME RESEMBLANCES OF DESTINY.

SOME interest will, perhaps, be felt on remarking in future—if I am destined to have any future—the coincidence presented by the two leaders of the new French and English schools, having one and the same fund of ideas, and destinies, if not manners, nearly similar: the one a peer of England, the other a peer of France; both travellers in the East, at no great distance of time from each other, but who never met. The only difference is that the life of the English poet was not mixed up with such great events as mine.

Lord Byron went to visit after me the ruins of Greece: in "Childe Harold" he seems to embellish with his own colours the descriptions of my "Travels." At the commencement of my pilgrimage, I introduced the farewell of Sire de Joinville to his castle: Byron, in like manner, bids adieu to his Gothic habitation.

In the "Martyrs" Eudorus sets out from Mes-

senia to proceed to Rome. "Our voyage," he says, "was long. We saw all those promontories marked by temples or tombs. . . . . We crossed the gulf of Megara. Before us was Ægina, on the right the Piræus, on the left Corinth. Those cities, of old so flourishing, exhibited only heaps of ruins. The very sailors appeared to be moved by this sight. The crowd collected upon the deck kept silence: each fixed his eyes stedfastly on those ruins; each perhaps drew from them in secret a consolation in his misfortunes, by reflecting how trifling are our own afflictions compared with those calamities which befal whole nations, and which had stretched before our eyes the corpses of those cities . . . . . My young companions had never heard of any other metamorphoses than those of Jupiter, and could not account for the ruins before their eyes: I, for my part, had already seated myself with the prophet on the ruins of desolate cities, and Babylon taught me what had happened to Corinth."

Now turn to the fourth canto of Lord Byron's "Childe Harold:"

> As my bark did skim
> The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
> Came Megara before me, and behind
> Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
> And Corinth on the left. I lay reclined
> Along the prow, and saw all these unite
> In ruin. * * * * *

> The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
> These sepulchres of cities, which excite
> Sad wonder, and this yet surviving page
> The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

Here the English poet, as well as the French prose-writer, falls short of the letter of Sulpicius to Cicero; but so complete a coincidence is singularly glorious for me, since I preceded the immortal bard on the shore where the same reflections occurred to both, and where we have commemorated the same ruins.

I have likewise the honour of agreeing with Lord Byron in the description of Rome. The "Martyrs," and my "Letter on the Campagna of Rome," claim for me the inestimable advantage of having anticipated the inspirations of a great genius. M. de Beranger, our immortal song-writer, has inserted in the last volume of his "Chansons" a note, too flattering to me to be quoted entire. In adverting to the impulse which, according to him, I have given to French poetry, he says: "The influence of the author of the 'Genie du Christianisme' has been equally felt abroad, and it would, perhaps, be but just to acknowledge that the bard of Childe Harold belongs to the family of René *."

* In an excellent article (*Biographie Univers.* Suppl.) on Lord Byron, M. Villemain has repeated the remark of M. de

If it be true that "René" had some influence upon the character of the single person brought forward under different names by the author of Childe Harold, Conrad, Lara, Manfred, the Giaour; if it so happened that Lord Byron has made me live with his life; could he have had the weakness never to mention me? Am I, then, one of those fathers whom one denies when one has arrived at power? Is it possible that I can have been wholly unknown to Lord Byron, though he quotes almost all the French authors, his contemporaries? Could it be that he never heard of me, though the English journals, like the French, rang for twenty years around him with the controversy on my works, and though the "New Times" drew a comparison between the author of the "Genie du Christianisme" and the author of "Childe Harold?"

There is no nature, how highly favoured soever it may be, but has its susceptibilities, its distrusts: one is anxious to retain the sceptre; one has a

Beranger. I hope I shall be forgiven for quoting here the words which concern myself. I seek an excuse for what I here say in these pages extracted from my Memoirs: the reader will please to reckon for nothing praise bestowed through the indulgence of talent. "Some incomparable pages of 'René,' had, it is true, exhausted this poetic character. I know not whether Byron imitated or renewed them by his genius."

dread of sharing it; one is irritated by comparisons. Thus another superior talent has avoided my name in a work on *literature*. Thank God! though estimating myself at my proper value, I have never laid claim to empire; as I believe in nothing but religious truth, of which liberty is a form, I have no more faith in myself than in any thing else here below. But I have never felt any necessity to keep silence when I have admired; hence it is that I proclaim my enthusiasm for Madame de Stael and for Lord Byron.

For the rest, a document would decide the question, were I in possession of one. On the appearance of "Atala," I received a letter from Cambridge, signed "G. Gordon, Lord Byron." Lord Byron, at the age of fifteen, was a star that had not yet risen: thousands of letters of censure or congratulation overwhelmed me; twenty secretaries would not have been sufficient to keep pace with this immense correspondence; I was compelled therefore to throw into the fire three-fourths of these letters, and to select only such as it was most incumbent on me to return thanks for or to defend myself against. I have some recollection, however, that I answered Lord Byron; but it is also possible that the note of the Cambridge student shared the general fate. In this case, my forced unpoliteness may have been construed into an

affront by an irascible mind, and he may have punished my silence by his own. How deeply have I since regretted the loss of the glorious lines of the early youth of a great poet!

What I have just said concerning the affinities of imagination and destiny between the chronicler of "René" and the bard of "Childe Harold," takes not a single hair from the head of its immortal author. Compared with the Muse of the Dee, furnished with lyre and wings, what is my pedestrian and luteless Muse? Lord Byron will live, whether as a child of his age, like me, he has expressed, like me, and like Göethe before us both, passion and wretchedness; and whether my peregrinations and the poop-lantern of my Gallic bark have pointed out the track to the vessel of Albion upon unexplored seas.

Besides, may not two minds of similar nature have similar conceptions without laying themselves open to the charge of having servilely trodden in the same steps? It is allowable to avail ourselves of ideas and images expressed in a foreign language, for the purpose of enriching our own with them: this has been done in all ages and at all times. Have I myself not had forerunners? I hesitate not to acknowledge that, in my early youth, "Ossian," "Werther," the "Reveries du Promeneur Solitaire," the "Studies of Nature."

may have allied themselves with my ideas; but a have never dissembled, never concealed, any portion of the pleasure imparted by the works in which I delighted. What is more delicious than admiration? In heaven it is love, affection exalted into adoration: we feel penetrated with gratitude to the Deity who extends the bases of our faculties, who opens new views to our souls, who bestows on us a felicity so great, so pure, without any mixture of fear or of envy.

SCHOOL OF LORD BYRON.

LORD Byron has left a deplorable school. I dare say he would be as displeased with the Childe Harolds to whom he has given birth, as I am with the Rénés that have sprung up around me. The *general* sentiments which compose the groundwork of human nature, paternal and maternal affection, filial piety, friendship, love, are inexhaustible; they will always impart new inspirations to the talent capable of developing them; but the *particular* manners of feeling, the *individualities* of mind and character, cannot extend and multiply themselves in grand and numerous pictures. The little undiscovered corners of the human heart are a narrow field; in this field there is nothing left to glean after the hand that reaped the first harvest. A disease of the soul is not a permanent and natural state; we cannot re-produce it, make a *literature* of it, avail ourselves of it as of a passion incessantly modified at the

pleasure of the various artists who mould it and change its form.

The life of Lord Byron has been the object of many investigations and calumnies. The young have taken certain magic words in earnest; the women have felt disposed to allow themselves to be seduced with dread, by this *monster*, to comfort this unhappy Satan. Who knows? he had perhaps not found the woman whom he sought—a woman beautiful enough, a heart vast as his own. Byron, according to the phantasmagoric opinion, is the Old Serpent, that seducer and corrupter, because he perceived the incurable corruption of the human race; he is a fatal and suffering genius, placed between the mysteries of matter and intelligence, who sees not a word in the enigma of the universe, who considers life as a horrible irony without cause, as a perverse smile of the Evil One: he is the eldest son of Despair, who despises and denies; who, having within him an incurable sore, revenges himself by leading all that approach him to misery through pleasure; a man who has not passed through the age of innocence, who never had the advantage of being rejected and cursed of God; a man who, having sprung a reprobate from the bosom of nature, is the damned of nothingness. Such is the Byron of heated imaginations.

Any person who is destined to live will not go down to future generations such as he really was; at some distance from him, his epopee commences; his person is idealised; he is transfigured; a power, vices, and virtues, which he never had, are attributed to him; the incidents of his life are garbled, they are wrested, they are wrought into a system. Biographers repeat these falsehoods; painters fix their inventions upon canvas, and posterity adopts the phantom. Very silly must he be who believes in history. History is a mere fallacy: as it is coloured and fashioned by a great writer, such it remains. Were we to discover memoirs, proving to demonstration that Tacitus has told egregious falsehoods in his account of the virtues of Agricola and the vices of Tiberius, Agricola and Tiberius would still remain what Tacitus has made them.

Two distinct persons are to be found in Lord Byron—the man of *nature* and the man of *system*. The poet, perceiving what part the public made him perform, accepted it, and began to curse the world, which had at first only been the subject of his reveries: this transition is obvious in the chronological order of his works. As for the character of his *genius*, so far from having the extent which is attributed to it, it is, on the contrary, very limited. His poetic and impassioned

thought is but a moan, a plaint, an imprecation; in this quality, it is admirable: we must not ask the lyre what it thinks but what it sings.

Lord Byron has abundance of wit, and extremely diversified wit, but of a kind that agitates and has a baneful influence. He has read Voltaire, and he frequently imitates him. In following the great English poet step by step, we are forced to acknowledge that he aims at effect, that he rarely loses sight of himself, that he is almost always in attitude; that he looks at himself with complacency; but the affectation of eccentricity, singularity, originality, belongs to the English character in general. If, however, Lord Byron has atoned for his genius by certain foibles, futurity will not concern itself about such paltry matters, or rather it will know nothing about them; the poet will hide the man, and will interpose talent between the man and future generations: through this divine veil posterity will discern nothing but the god.

Lord Byron has formed an epoch; he will leave behind him a trace so deep that it cannot be erased. The accident which made him lame and increased his wildness, ought not to have given him any concern, since it did not prevent his being loved. Unfortunately, the poet did not always place his affections high enough, and suffered too lowly attachments to entwine themselves around him.

We cannot but pity Rousseau and Byron for having offered at altars unworthy of their sacrifices; perhaps, covetous of time, every minute of which belonged to the world, they were desirous only of pleasure, charging their talent to transform it into passion and glory. Melancholy, jealousy, the pangs of love, were for their lyres; for themselves voluptuous enjoyment and its sleep beneath light hands: they sought reverie, unhappiness, tears, despair, in solitude, winds, darkness, storms, forests, seas, and composed from them for their readers the torments of Childe Harold and St. Preux upon the bosom of La Padoana and del Can de la Madona.

Be this as it may, in the moment of their intoxication, the illusion of love was complete; for the rest, they were perfectly aware that they held Inconstancy herself in their arms; that she would fly away with the dawn. She did not deceive them with a false semblance of fidelity; she did not impose on herself the task of following them, weary of their tenderness or her own. To sum up all, Jean Jacques and Lord Byron were both unfortunate men; this was the condition of their genius: the first poisoned himself; the second, weary of his excesses, and feeling the need of esteem, returned to the shores of that Greece where his Muse and Death rendered him in turn such good service.

LORD BYRON AT THE LIDO.

I PRECEDED Lord Byron in life; he has preceded me in death. He was called before his turn: my number had the start of his, and yet his came out first. The world might have lost me without being aware of my disappearance and without regretting me.

All that I have seen pass, or all that has passed, around me since I have existed cannot be told. How many graves have opened and closed before my eyes! A hundred times, in sunshine or in rain, on the brink of an open grave, into which they were letting down a coffin with ropes, have I heard the creaking of those ropes, have I heard the first shovelful of earth falling on that coffin, and at every fresh shovelful the hollow sound becoming duller and more dull. The mould, as it filled the grave, made eternal silence ascend by degrees to its surface.

It is not yet two years since, one day at dawn, I

was strolling upon the Lido, where Lord Byron had so often strolled. It was but a faint and unsmiling Aurora that issued from the sea; the transformation of darkness into light, with its wonderful changes, its stars extinguished one by one in the gold and the roses of morning, did not take place. Four or five barks were coasting close along the shore; a large ship was just disappearing on the horizon. The wet beach was dotted with groups of sea-gulls; some of them were flying heavily above the receding waves. The ebb-tide had left the traces of its concentric arcs on the shore; the sand, garlanded with sea-weed, was wrinkled by every wave, like a brow over which Time has passed his hand. The retiring water attached its white festoons to the abandoned beach.

The waves which I meet with have been everywhere my faithful companions: like young girls holding each other by the hand in a round dance, they encircled me at my birth. I saluted these rockers of my cradle. I walked along the margin of the billows, listening to their noise, doleful, familiar, and grateful to my ear. I frequently paused to contemplate the immensity of the sea; a mast, a cloud, were sufficient to awaken my recollections.

I had formerly crossed this sea. In front of the Lido a storm overtook me. I said to myself in

the midst of this tempest that I had confronted others, but that, when I traversed the ocean I was young, and that then dangers were pleasures to me. I considered myself, therefore, as very old when I sailed from the harbour of Trieste for Greece and Syria. Beneath what a heap of days am I then buried!

Lord Byron galloped along this solitary shore. What were his thoughts and his strains, his fears and his hopes? Did he raise his voice to confide to the storm the inspirations of his genius? Was it amidst the murmur of those waves that he found these melancholy accents —

> If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
> Of hasty growth, and dull oblivion bar
> My name from out the temple where the dead
> Are honour'd by the nations—let it be!

Byron was sensible that his fortunes were "of hasty growth;" in his moments of doubt respecting his glory, as he did not believe in any other immortality, he had no joy left him but annihilation. His disgust would have been less bitter, his flight here below less barren, had he changed his course: at the end of his exhausted passions, some generous effort would have enabled him to attain a new existence. We are unbelieving because we stop at the surface of the matter: dig deep enough, you will find heaven.

I had already returned from the forests of America, when, in the neighbourhood of London, beneath the elm of Childe Harold, then a boy, I planned the disappointments, disgusts, and sorrows of Réné. I had seen the first traces of Byron's footsteps in the paths of Harrow Hill; I met with the last prints of them at one of the stations of his pilgrimage; no, I sought those prints in vain. Raised by the hurricane, the sand has covered the tracks of the steed left without a rider. "Fisherman of Malamoco, hast thou ever heard of Lord Byron?"—"Have I? he rode here almost every day."—"Know'st thou whither he is gone?"

It was a stormy day: on the point of perishing between Malta and the Sirtes, I enclosed in an empty bottle a paper on which I wrote these words: "F. A. de Chateaubriand, shipwrecked on the island of Lampedosa, the 26th of December, 1806, on his return from the Holy Land." A frail bottle, a few lines, tossing over a bottomless abyss, were all that suited my fortune and my memory. The currents would perhaps have propelled my vagrant epitaph to the Lido, to the very spot which Byron had marked for his grave, as the waves of time have cast my wandering life upon that shore.

O Venice! when I beheld thee for the first

time, thou wert under the dominion of the great man who was thy oppressor and mine. An island awaited his grave; an island is thine. Ye both sleep immortal in your St. Helenas. O Venice! our destinies have been alike: my dreams pass away as fast as thy palaces crumble into ruin. The hours of my spring are become black, like the arabesques which decorate the summit of thy buildings. But thou perishest, unknown to thyself; as for me, I am aware of my ruin. Thy delicious sky, the bright waves that wash thee, have found me, in these last days, as sensible to thy charms as ever I was. To no purpose I grow old. The energy of my nature has concentrated itself at the bottom of my heart; years have succeeded only in driving away my outward youth, in making it seek refuge in my bosom. But what to me are the breezes of the Lido, so dear to the poet of the Daughter of Ravenna? The wind which blows on a half despoiled head does not come from any lucky shore.*

* Here end the quotations from the Memoirs.

CONCLUSION.

For the rest, the little squabble that I have had in my Posthumous Memoirs with the greatest poet that England has produced since Milton, only proves one thing—the high value which I should have attached to the most trifling memorial of his Muse. Now, readers, does it not seem to you that we are finishing a rapid excursion among ruins, like that which I formerly made upon the ruins of Athens, Jerusalem, Memphis, and Carthage? In passing from one renown to another, and seeing them all engulfed in their turn, is not a feeling of sadness excited within you?

Look behind you; ask what has become of those brilliant and tumultuous times, in which flourished Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, Shakspeare and Milton, Cromwell and William III., Pitt and Burke. All this is past. Superiority and mediocrity, hate and love, felicity and wretchedness, oppressor and oppressed, executioner and victim, kings and peo-

ple, all sleep in the same silence, and in the same dust; and yet, what is it that has engaged our attention? The most living part of human nature, the genius which remains scarcely as the shadow of the old times among us, but no longer lives for itself, nay knows not if it ever existed.

How often, in this picture of ten centuries, has England been destroyed before our eyes! Through how many revolutions have we not passed to reach the brink of a still greater, still deeper, revolution, which will envelop posterity! I have seen that famous British parliament in all its power: what will become of it? I have seen England in its ancient manners and its ancient prosperity: every where the solitary church with its tower, Gray's country church-yard, narrow gravelled roads, valleys filled with cattle, commons dotted with sheep, parks, mansions, towns, few extensive woods, few birds, the sea-breeze. These were not those fields of Andalusia, where I found old Christians and young loves amid the ruins of the voluptuous palaces of the Moors, among aloes and palm trees; this was not the Campagna of Rome, the irresistible charm of which was incessantly recurring to me; those waves and that sun were not the same that bathe and light the promontory on which Plato taught his disciples, that Sunium on which I heard the chirp of the grasshopper inquiring in vain of Mi-

nerva for the abode of the priests of her temple; but, at any rate, such as it was, this England, surrounded by her shipping, covered by her flocks, and professing the worship of her great men, was charming.

Now, her valleys are darkened by the smoke of forges and manufactories; her highways are turned into rail-roads: and, on these roads, instead of meeting Milton and Shakspeare, you encounter itinerant steam-engines. Already those nurseries of science, where flourished the palms of glory, Oxford and Cambridge, which will soon be despoiled, are assuming a deserted look: their colleges and their Gothic chapels, half forsaken, pain the eye; in their dusty cloisters, beside sepulchral stones of the middle ages, repose forgotten the marble annals of those tribes of Greece that no longer exist—ruins the keepers of ruins.

Society, such as it is at present, will not continue to exist. As instruction descends to the lower classes, these will discover the secret cancer which has been corroding social order ever since the beginning of the world; a complaint which is the cause of all popular discontents and commotions. The too great inequality of conditions and fortunes has been able to uphold itself so long as it was hidden on the one hand by ignorance, on the other by the factitious organisation of the City;

but no sooner is this inequality generally perceived, than a mortal blow is given to it.

Enforce again, if you can, the aristocratic fictions. Strive to persuade the poor man, when he has learned to read—the poor man, who is daily prompted by the press, from time to time, from village to village—strive to persuade this poor man, possessing the same knowledge and understanding as yourself, that he ought to submit to all privations, whilst such-a-one, his neighbour, possesses, without labour, a thousand times as much he needs—your efforts will be useless. Expect not of the multitude virtues that are beyond nature.

The material development of society will advance the development of mind. When steam communication shall be brought to perfection, when, jointly with the telegraph and rail-roads, it shall have annihilated distance, not merchandise alone, but ideas also, will travel from one extremity of the globe to the other with the rapidity of lightning. When the fiscal and commercial barriers between different states shall be abolished, as they already are between the provinces of one and the same state; when *wages*, which is but a prolonged *slavery*, shall have emancipated themselves with the assistance of the equality established between the producer and the consumer; when the different

countries, adopting each other's manners, forsaking national prejudices, the old ideas of supremacy or conquest, shall tend to a unity of nations; by what means will you make society turn back to worn-out principles? Bonaparte himself could not do this: equality and liberty, to which he opposed the unyielding bar of his genius, have resumed their course, and borne down his works; the world of force which he created is gone; his institutions are decaying; nay, his very race has become extinct with his son. The light which he kindled was but a meteor; of Napoleon there remains and will remain nothing but his memory.

From thee, Napoleon,
God, rising in his might, will snatch thy people:
His wrath will follow to thy narrow grave *.

There was but a single monarchy in Europe—the French monarchy: all the others were its daughters; all of them are going with their mother. Kings have hitherto, unknown to themselves, lived behind that monarchy a thousand years old, under the protection of a race incorporated, as it were, with ages. When the blast of the revolution had thrown down that race, Bonaparte came; he upheld the princes tottering upon thrones by him demolished and raised again.

* "Napoleon," by Edgar Quinet.

Bonaparte gone, the remaining monarchs live cowering in the ruins of the Napoleonic Coliseum, like the hermits to whom the traveller doles out alms in the Coliseum at Rome; but soon these ruins themselves will fail them.

Legitimacy might have continued to lead the world for more than another century to a transformation gradually accomplished, without shock and without catastrophe: more than a century was still necessary to complete under paternal guardianship the free education of nations. Against faults which might easily have been repaired, passions, which did not at first see that every thing might be arranged, and that the world might still be indebted to legitimacy for an immense and a last benefit, have resorted to arms. Instead of descending by a gentle and easy slope, we must, therefore, continue to pursue ways intersected by chasms and quagmires. What are halts of a few months or a few years for a nation launched at random into a boundless space? What mind possessing any discernment could take these intervals of rest for a definitive repose? Is a casual bait a permanent feast? Has the traveller who sits down by the road-side to refresh himself reached his journey's end? Any power, overthrown, not by accident, but by time, by a change gradually effected in convictions or ideas, is never re-established; in

vain you would strive to raise it under another name, to regenerate it under a new form: it cannot re-adjust its dislocated limbs in the dust in which it lies, an object of insult or of derision. Of the divinity which people had forged for themselves, before which they had bent the knee, nothing is left but ironical miseries. When the Christians broke in pieces the gods of Egypt, they saw rats run forth from the heads of the idols. All things pass away. Not an infant now issues from the womb of his mother but is an enemy to the old society.

But when shall we arrive at that which is destined to remain? When will society, heretofore composed of concentric aggregations and families, from the hearth of the labourer to the hearth of the king, be re-composed upon an unknown system, a system more approximated to nature, according to ideas and by the aid of means which are not yet in existence? God knows. Who can calculate the resistance of the passions, the friction of vanities, the perturbations, the accidents, of history? The breaking out of a war, the appearance at the head of the state of an able or a stupid man, the slightest event, may beat back, suspend, or accelerate, the march of nations. More than once death will paralyse races full of fire, and throw silence over events on the point of accom-

plishment, as a little snow falling in the night puts a stop to the noise of a great city.

Want of energy at the period in which we live; the nullity or degradation of characters too frequently strangers to honour and devoted to interest; indifference towards good and evil, vice and virtue; the worship of guilt; the carelessness or apathy with which we look upon events that of old would have convulsed the world; the privation of those conditions of life which seem necessary to social order—all these things may authorise the belief that the *denouement* is approaching, that the curtain is about to rise, and another performance to begin: no such thing. Other men have not hidden themselves behind the present men; that which strikes our eyes is not an exception, it is the common state of manners, ideas, and passions; it is the great and universal disease of a world which is at the point of dissolution. Were every thing changed to-morrow, with the proclamation of other principles, we should see nothing but what we now see—reveries in some, frenzies in others, equally impotent, equally barren.

Let some independent men step aside to allow the torrent of miseries to flow off—alas! they will have passed away before these! Let young generations, filled with illusions, confront the impure flood of baseness, let them proceed with head bent

forward to a pure future which they hope to seize, but which incessantly eludes their grasp: finding in their devotedness the reward of their sacrifice, having proceeded from chimera to chimera, and arrived on the brink of the grave, they will bequeath the weight of disappointed years to other mistaken generations, which will carry them to the nearest tombs, and so on successively.

A future there will be, a mighty future, free in all the plenitude of evangelical equality; but it is still far, very far beyond any visible horizon: it will not be attained but by that untiring Hope, incorruptible by misfortune, whose wings grow and enlarge in proportion as everything seems to deceive it; by that hope stronger and longer than time, and which the Christian alone possesses. Before mankind arrive at the goal, before they attain the unity of nations, natural democracy, they will have to pass through the social decomposition; a time of anarchy, perhaps of blood, certainly of infirmities. This decomposition is begun; it is not ready to produce from its germs, not yet sufficiently fermented, the new world.

MILTON.

By way of conclusion, let us return to the primary object of this work, and again descend to the humble rank of translator. When a man has seen like me, Washington and Bonaparte; upon a level with them, but in another order of power, Pitt and Mirabeau; among the high revolutionists, Robespierre and Danton; among the plebeian masses, the common man marching to the exterminations of the frontiers, the Vendean peasant shutting himself up with his blazing crops, what more remains to be seen behind the great tomb of St. Helena?

Why have I survived the age and the men to whom I belonged by the date of the hour at which my mother inflicted life upon me? Why have I not disappeared with my contemporaries, the last remnants of an exhausted race? Why am I left alone to seek their bones amid the darkness and dust of a crumbled world? I had everything to gain by not dragging on a longer existence upon the earth. I should not have been obliged to

begin and afterwards to suspend my posthumous acts of justice, to write this book, in order to preserve my independence as a man.

When, at the beginning of my life, England afforded me an asylum, I translated some of Milton's verses, to supply the wants of the exile: now, having returned to my country, drawing nigh to the end of my career, I again have recourse to the poet of Eden. The author of "Paradise Lost" was not, however, richer than I am. Seated among his daughters, deprived of the light of heaven, but illumined by the torch of his genius, he dictated his verses to them. I have no daughters; I can contemplate the luminary of day, but I cannot say to it, of myself, like the blind British bard,—

How glorious once above thy sphere!

Milton served Cromwell; I have combated Napoleon: he attacked kings; I have defended them: he hoped nothing from their pardon; have not reckoned upon their gratitude. Now that in both our countries monarchy is declining towards its end, Milton and I have no more political questions to squabble about. I shall seat myself at the table of my host; he will have nourished me young and old. It is nobler, it is safer, to have recourse to glory than to power.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

00066562

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 06 February, 2016